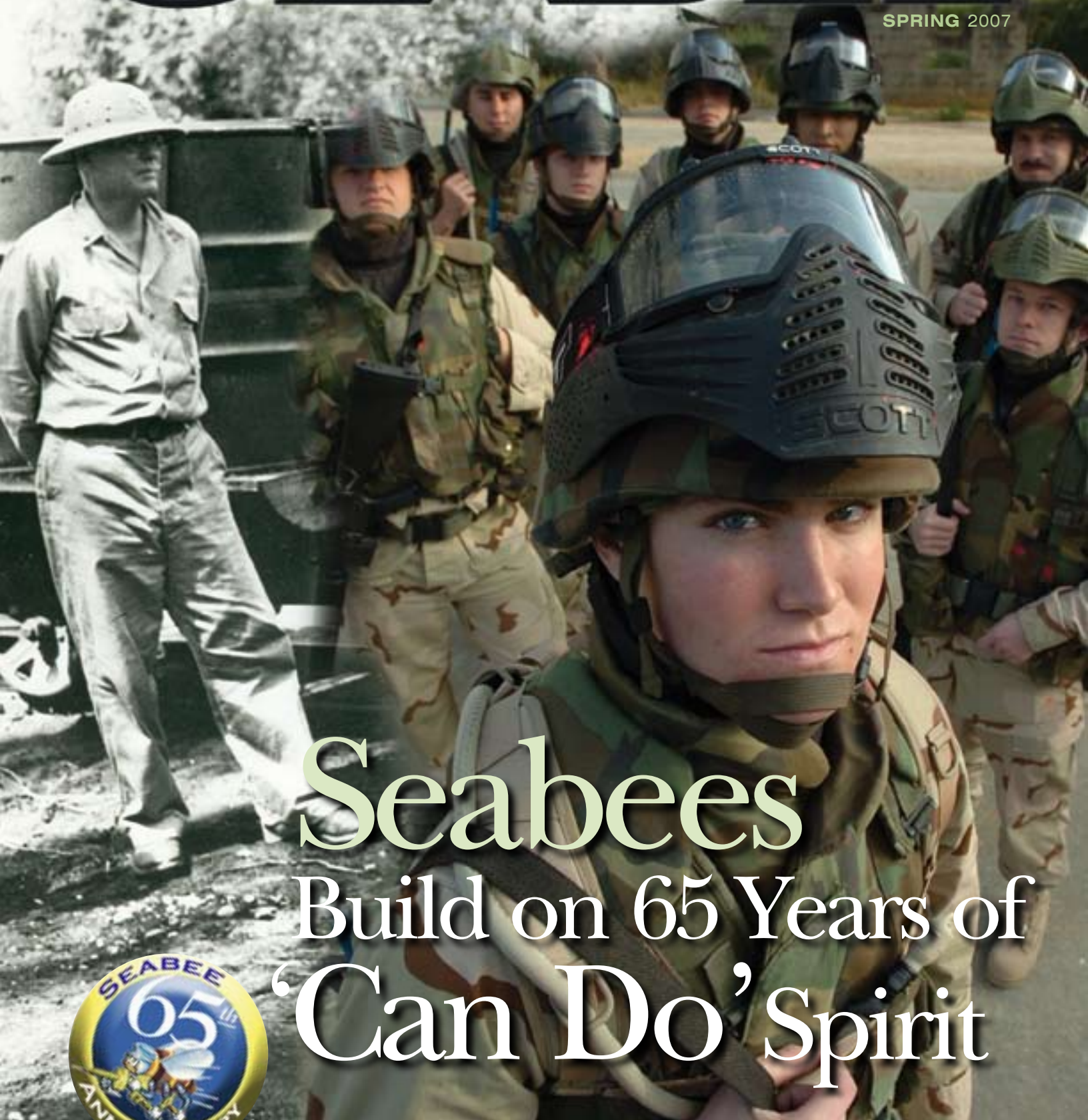


UNITED STATES NAVY

# SEABEE

SPRING 2007



## Seabees Build on 65 Years of 'Can Do' Spirit



**INSIDE:** Naval Construction Force Receives Modernized Vehicles, Equipment and Gear



**Greg Shear**  
REAR ADMIRAL, CEC, USN  
COMMANDER & CHIEF OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

**John E. Roark Jr.**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**James D. Fairbanks**  
FORMC (SCW), FORCE MASTER CHIEF  
PETTY OFFICER OF THE SEABEES

**Virginia Bueno**  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS  
DIRECTOR

**Whit DeLoach**  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

## FIRST NAVAL CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

**Robert L. Phillips**  
REAR ADMIRAL, CEC, USN  
COMMANDER

**Albert Garcia III**  
REAR ADMIRAL, CEC, USNR  
DEPUTY COMMANDER

**Jerry B. Major**  
CMDM (SCW)  
COMMAND MASTER CHIEF

**Calvin O. Foster**  
CMDM (SCW)  
COMMAND MASTER CHIEF (RESERVE)

**Daryl C. Smith**  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

## QNEXIS, INC.

Strategic Marketing and Communications  
[www.qnexis.com](http://www.qnexis.com)

**Liz Dunn**  
Editorial Copy and Content Management

**Luisa Palting**  
Graphic Design, Layout and Production

**Kurt Nguyen**  
Project Management

Seabee Magazine thanks the active duty, reserve officer and enlisted personnel, as well as the civilians, who provide content for the publication. We look forward to your ongoing contributions as we continue to tell the Seabee story.

# FEATURES

## SEABEES BUILD ON 65 YEARS OF 'CAN DO' SPIRIT

- 3 Builder Warriors begin the next 65 years...and beyond
- 4 Naval Construction Force (NCF) receives \$405 million for modernized vehicles, equipment and gear
- 6 Seabees featured in historical snapshot
- 8 Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) marks one-year anniversary with Seabees filling a major role
- 10 Contingency, training and humanitarian operations highlight 2006
- 11 Loose, Cellon, Handley receive stars

## GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

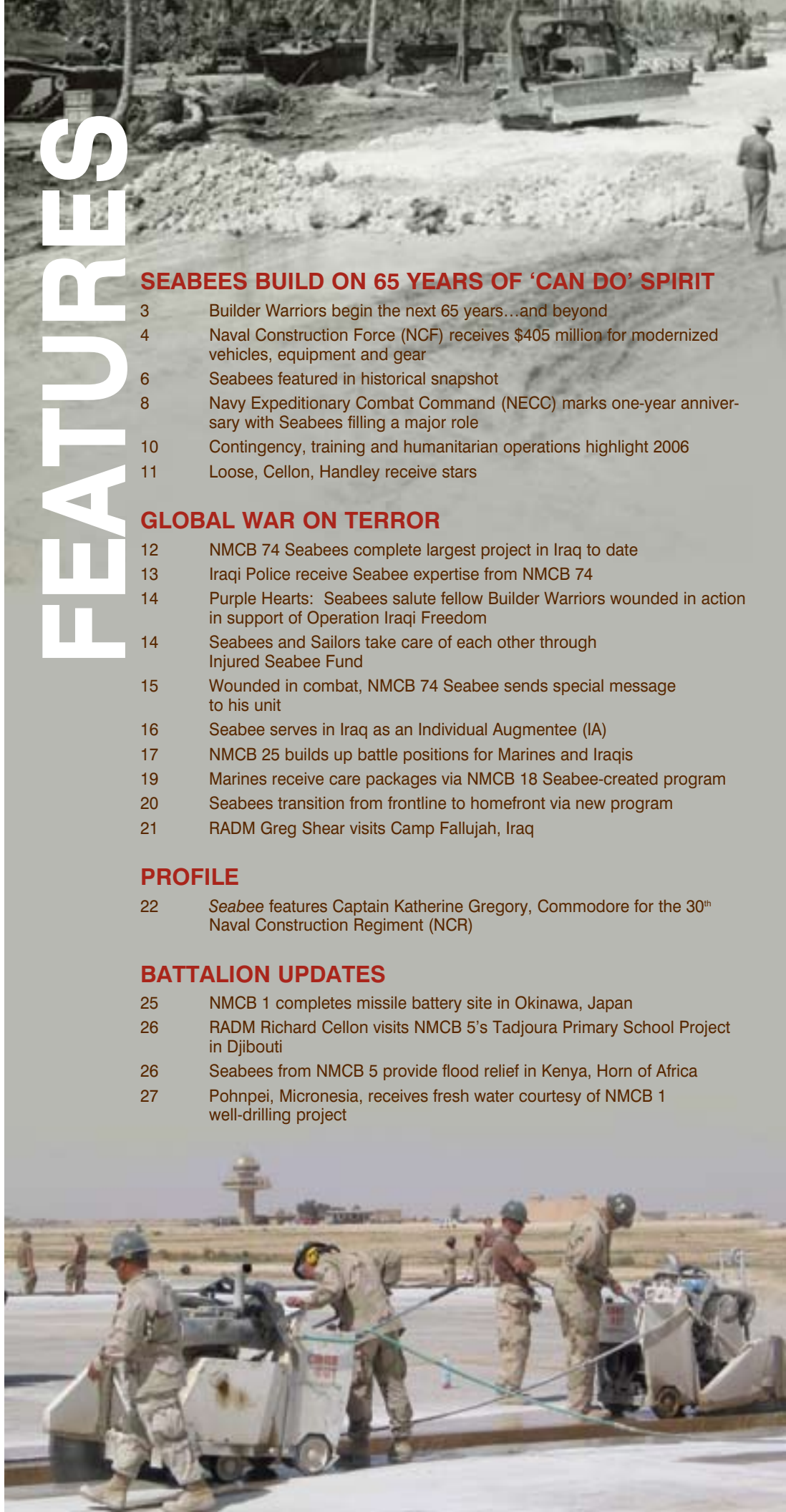
- 12 NMCB 74 Seabees complete largest project in Iraq to date
- 13 Iraqi Police receive Seabee expertise from NMCB 74
- 14 Purple Hearts: Seabees salute fellow Builder Warriors wounded in action in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom
- 14 Seabees and Sailors take care of each other through Injured Seabee Fund
- 15 Wounded in combat, NMCB 74 Seabee sends special message to his unit
- 16 Seabee serves in Iraq as an Individual Augmentee (IA)
- 17 NMCB 25 builds up battle positions for Marines and Iraqis
- 19 Marines receive care packages via NMCB 18 Seabee-created program
- 20 Seabees transition from frontline to homefront via new program
- 21 RADM Greg Shear visits Camp Fallujah, Iraq

## PROFILE

- 22 Seabee features Captain Katherine Gregory, Commodore for the 30<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Regiment (NCR)

## BATTALION UPDATES

- 25 NMCB 1 completes missile battery site in Okinawa, Japan
- 26 RADM Richard Cellon visits NMCB 5's Tadjoura Primary School Project in Djibouti
- 26 Seabees from NMCB 5 provide flood relief in Kenya, Horn of Africa
- 27 Pohnpei, Micronesia, receives fresh water courtesy of NMCB 1 well-drilling project



# SPRING 07



## *Happy Birthday, Seabees!*

To Seabees, members of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and officers of the Civil Engineer Corps, it is my honor and privilege to wish you a **Happy Birthday**.

This year marks the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Seabees, 165<sup>th</sup> year of NAVFAC's establishment as the former Bureau of Yards and Docks, and the 140<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Civil Engineer Corps. I could not be more proud of your accomplishments and sacrifices during this past year. We have much to celebrate this year: the vision of our legendary forefathers, William P. S. Sanger and Admiral Ben Moreell, the support and encouragement of our nation, our disaster relief and humanitarian efforts that are making lives better around the world, and our resolute focus on serving our supported commanders. More importantly, this milestone year is a time for us to look forward to new facilities/contingency engineering, and acquisition challenges on the horizon. I have the fullest confidence that you will draw inspiration from the events of the past and achieve still greater excellence in the future.

Since our establishment, the Civil Engineer Corps, NAVFAC and the Seabees have accumulated a distinguished record of accomplishment. Today, as our nation continues to face the challenges of the Global War on Terror and other threats in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, our men and women continue to answer the call when needed. Our Seabees and CEC officers continue to serve with distinction in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Djibouti, Pakistan, Korea, the Philippines and other locations supporting the fight for freedom and improving the lives of peace loving people around the world.

While we take time to rejoice our glorious past, let us also pause to reflect on those who have preceded us both in times of peace and conflict. May our memory of them never fade and may we resolve to honor them with our unwavering commitment and dedication to duty and mission. At the same time, let us remember our brothers and sisters serving in harm's way in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. We praise them for their service and pray for their safe and speedy return to their families and loved ones.

To Civil Engineer Corps officers, the 'Can Do' Seabees, and the dedicated NAVFAC civilian workforce, thank you all for your service, for your patriotism and for your sacrifices. I congratulate you on your successes and salute you for what you will do in the future.

May God bless each of you, your families, our magnificent Navy and Marine Corps team, and the United States of America.

RADM Greg Shear, CEC, USN  
Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command,  
& Chief of Civil Engineers

## TRAINING

- 28 NMCB 4 tests battalion readiness capabilities during Operation Meathook
- 29 NMCB 17 leads the team in building premiere NECC training facility at China Lake, Calif.
- 30 NMCB 4 squads battle it out in Seabee Olympics
- 30 Operation Bearing Duel sharpens NMCB 4 warfare skills

## A SPECIAL HOMECOMING

- 31 Blackmon family receives heartfelt gift from hometown community

## DEPARTMENTS

### AWARDS & COMMENDATIONS

- 32 Seabee receives Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Military Recognition Award
- 32 NMCB 4 wins Physical Readiness Excellence Award

### NEWSBREAK

- 33 Seabees from NMCB 3 rescue Tokyo man from subway tracks
- 34 BMU 1 Sailors save residents from apartment fire in California
- 34 NMCB 5 Seabees help rescue Kenyan man from flood waters
- 35 NASCAR Fleet Honoree Program gives NMCB 23 Seabees the VIP treatment
- 36 NAVFAC & Seabees star in new Command video
- 36 Seabee reunions scheduled for all eras

### FINAL WORD

RADM Robert L. Phillips, Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Naval Construction Division, reflects on the Seabees' past, present and future

#### Then and Now

Photo Illustrations

(Above) Seabees construct a coral airstrip in the Pacific Theater, c. 1943.

U.S. Navy photo

(Left) NMCB 25 Seabees use commercial saws to cut through damaged sections of concrete on an airstrip in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

Photo by BU1 Frederick Schrepfer

(Cover) Seabee serving in the Pacific Theater, c. 1943.

U.S. Navy photo

CECA Benjamin Coulson, NMCB 3, stands at the front of his squad before going through a team-building training exercise at the Combat Town Training Center, Marine Corps Base Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, in February 2007. Coulson served as part of a detachment of 53 Seabees from DET Special Operation Forces before deploying to Afghanistan later in the month.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yopez





In 1942, perhaps only Admiral Ben Moreell, Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, knew that the group he created from the initial letters of **C**onstruction **B**attalion would have such a profound role in naval history. Known as the “Father of the Seabees,” Admiral Moreell bestowed the official motto — *Construimus, Batuimus* — “*We Build, We Fight.*”

Sixty-five years ago, in not-so-humble beginnings, Seabees supported Navy and Marine Corps combat operations in both World War II and the Korean conflict in the years to follow. Through the next several decades, Seabees delivered on the substantial demand for military construction during the Vietnam War, and supported operations in Somalia, the Persian Gulf and in other global hotspots. Of course, the Global War on Terror has again delivered Seabees on the ground in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait where construction support for Navy and Marine Corps forces is critical to lasting stability in this region.

In addition, humanitarian missions and natural disasters — both on the homefront and around the world — have kept Seabees busy making life better for others around the world for more than six decades.

Our ultimate goal for *Seabee Magazine* is to capture this “Can Do” spirit in the pages of the publication: to help tell the story — your story — to the military and civilian communities. In this

**Our ultimate goal for *Seabee Magazine* is to capture that “Can Do” spirit ... to help tell the story — your story — to the military and civilian communities.**

issue, we debut a feature titled *Profile*. This will be an ongoing section of the magazine to highlight Seabees, regardless of position or rank, who are making special contributions to the Naval Construction Force. CAPT Katherine Gregory, Commodore for the 30<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), is the subject of our first profile. Gregory is not only the first female active duty regimental commander, but she also walks the talk of ‘intrusive leadership’ with great success, according to her troops.

We are looking for other Seabees who emulate the “Can Do” spirit to feature in the *Profile* section in future issues. Please send us names of fellow

Builder Warriors and a brief write-up describing how they make a difference in the Navy community. Contact us via...

E-mail: [seabeemagazine@navy.mil](mailto:seabeemagazine@navy.mil)

Voice: (202) 685-9108 or DSN 325-9108

Fax: (202) 685-1484 or DSN 325-1484.

We also encourage stories, photos\*, comments and candid feedback so that we may continue to provide a well-rounded account of the Seabee story.

Thank you for your continued interest in *Seabee!*

Sincerely,  
*Seabee Magazine*

\* Preferred format for photo resolution is 300dpi at 5x7 inches minimum.

## Seabee Magazine Spring 2007

### MILITARY RECIPIENTS

Units or organizations with Seabees assigned are authorized no-cost distributions of *SEABEE Magazine* (ISSN 1546-8429). Send requests by mail or fax on official letterhead signed by the commanding officer or officer in charge, citing number of unit personnel, to the editor at the magazine's postal address or fax number shown below.

### CIVILIAN SUBSCRIPTIONS

Paid subscriptions to the official magazine of the U.S. Navy Seabees, *SEABEE Magazine*, are available from the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954, or call (202) 512-1800 and ask for the publications order desk. The best method for obtaining a paid subscription is to point your Web browser to <http://bookstore.gpo.gov> and enter the Search term *SEABEE*. This returns a means to enter your subscription via a secure credit card transaction. Current subscription prices are \$25 per year or \$7 per issue FPO/APO/ domestic and \$36 per year or \$9.80 per issue foreign.

### POSTMASTER

Send address corrections to the Editor at the magazine address shown at right.

### AUTHORIZATION

The Secretary of the Navy has determined this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law of the Department of the Navy.

### EDITORIAL

*SEABEE Magazine* is scheduled quarterly (except for combined or other special issues) by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Public Affairs Office from the historic Washington Navy Yard, “the Quarterdeck of the Navy.” Our readership consists of Active and Reserve Seabees and CEC officers and their families, as well as veterans, retirees and the general public. Letters and electronic mail are welcome on all Seabee-related topics and, if published, are subject to editing for length and clarity. Written and photographic submissions that show Active and Reserve Seabees are strongly encouraged. We prefer to receive all written and photographic submissions by e-mail to [seabeemagazine@navy.mil](mailto:seabeemagazine@navy.mil). Film or digital images should include captions and be unmodified; digital files should measure at least 300dpi at 5x7 inches. All submissions must include the author's full name, rank/rate, postal address, duty contact telephone number(s) and e-mail address. Submissions by regular postal mail are strongly discouraged due to security precautions that may damage fragile contents. If necessary, send all postal mail to:

NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND  
Attn: Editor, *SEABEE Magazine* (Code PA)  
1322 Patterson Avenue, S.E., Suite 1000  
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5065

Contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Department of Defense, the Navy, NAVFAC, the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) or the U.S. Navy Seabees. Inclusions of or references to any product or service in editorial content do not constitute endorsement by the U.S. Navy, NAVFAC, the CEC or the Seabees. All trademarks, service marks or other symbols, names, images or logos are and remain the sole property of their respective owners. Military address corrections, story and photo submissions, and requests for writer's guidelines may be sent to the magazine's postal or e-mail address. Paid-subscriber address corrections must be sent to the GPO address above.

### CONTACTS

E-mail: [seabeemagazine@navy.mil](mailto:seabeemagazine@navy.mil)  
Voice: (202) 685-9108 or DSN 325-9108  
Fax: (202) 685-1484 or DSN 325-1484

To learn more about the Seabees and Seabee opportunities, discover us on the Internet at [www.seabee.navy.mil](http://www.seabee.navy.mil). For information on Navy careers, see [www.navy.com](http://www.navy.com). To learn more about the technical Civil Engineer Corps and the global activity of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, we invite you to visit the NAVFAC Web site at [www.navfac.navy.mil](http://www.navfac.navy.mil).

**STAY NAVY. STAY SEABEE.**



# 1942 ★ ★ ★ ★ 2007

Honoring past, present and future Builder Warriors, the official memorial for the U.S. Navy Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps served as the backdrop at the annual wreath-laying ceremony for the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Seabees. UCCM (SCW) Brian Farricy (left), Seabee Readiness, NAVFAC Headquarters, and RDML Mark Handley, Deputy Commander, Commander Naval Installations Command (CNIC), place the wreaths on the memorial at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C., on March 10, 2007.

U.S. Navy photo



**T**his year marks an important anniversary in the history of the Seabees — 65 years of providing the gold standard in Naval Construction Force (NCF) support, protecting the United States and our allied nations, and serving our Warfighters, the Fleet and their families with pride.

With this milestone comes good news. More than \$400 million in new tactical vehicles, construction equipment and personal protective gear has already started to hit the ground in Iraq and other global hotspots where Seabees support the Global War on Terror. The 25<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 are slated for commissioning in October 2007. The Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) marked its one-year anniversary and is now an integrated force of approximately 40,000 Sailors, with Seabees comprising the vast majority.

As we enter our next 65 years and beyond, two competing visions of the future are at the forefront of our nation's military agenda: America's vision and that of all freedom-loving people, which is one of hope, prosperity and liberty; and the vision of our enemies, which is one of fear, poverty and tyranny.

The Builder Warriors continue to be on the frontlines of that fight. "This is our heritage," said RADM Robert L. Phillips, Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Naval Construction Division. "The Seabees remain a force to be reckoned with to this day, and [you] continue to make the world a better place."

It is more critical than ever to harness that historic 'Can Do' spirit — to continue the momentum and take the NCF to the next level. We expect a lot. But then again, Seabee history has made that a very realistic expectation.



# Seabee FUNDING

## Congress Approves \$405 million for Updated Expeditionary Equipment

By NAVFAC Headquarters

In late 2006, the U.S. Congress approved \$405 million in appropriations for the Naval Construction Force (NCF), an unprecedented earmark for the Seabees, to replace and modernize its suite of tactical vehicles, construction equipment and personal protective gear beginning immediately.

As the largest Navy ground force deployed to Iraq, the Seabees are filling many traditional and non-traditional roles.

The Seabees deployed to Iraq in March 2003 and have been demonstrating their famous "Can Do" spirit to make a difference in the Global War on Terror. While the Seabees have always achieved greatness in both times of peace and

war, they will make an even greater difference with the latest in modern, cutting-edge equipment.

In testimony to members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) ADM Mike Mullen said the Seabees are working very hard support-

a rather indestructible lot," the CNO continued, "the same cannot be said for their equipment."

Seabees are receiving the newest generation of tactical machines, including the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, the latest up-armored models of High-Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) and Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacements (MTVRs). Each MRAP is equipped with the latest convoy communications and elec-

tronic equipment. Delivery is already in progress and will continue through FY08.

One of the main focuses of the new procurement strategy is to ensure that Seabees are outfitted with modern-

**Though [Seabees] remain 'by nature a rather indestructible lot, the same cannot be said for their equipment.'**

— CNO ADM Mike Mullen

ing the ground forces. They are "driving convoys, building forward staging bases deep inside Iraq and helping communities recover from natural disaster," he noted.

Though they remain "by nature

**Field testing was recently completed on the new Atlas Copco T2W water well rigs. Fully self-contained and highly mobile, the rigs travel at highway speeds, and parts are readily available. A total of 12 rigs and tenders will be purchased by the end of the fiscal year.**

U.S. Navy photo



# NEW EQUIPMENT



An armored vehicle, specifically configured for the Seabees, is staged in Port Hueneme, Calif., awaiting deployment to Iraq. The first series of armored vehicles is being retrofitted in Port Hueneme with the latest in tactical communications and other electronic gear. NAVFAC Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) developed the communications prototype and is overseeing the initial installation.

Photo by Jim P. Cencer, NFELC

ized equipment and tools so they can accomplish their security and construction missions at reduced risk to such threats as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire. In Iraq, the MRAP has already proven to be particularly effective in countering the devastating effects of IEDs.

As the war continues to take its toll on equipment, new equipment is on its way. The CESE slated to be procured includes new excavators, road graders, front end loaders and rollers. The majority of this equipment will be back-fitted with armor plating to provide the protection necessary to operate in the hazardous battlefield environment.

In addition to earthmoving equip-

ment, cranes, generators, welders, concrete plants and mixers, and compressors will be replaced. New construction equipment will also make it much easier to buy replacement parts, significantly reducing equipment downtime and greatly enhancing jobsite productivity.

Funding will also ensure that Seabees are outfitted with the most up-to-date personal protective equipment (PPE). The new PPE includes Outer Tactical Vests (OTVs) with enhanced small arms protective inserts, the Helmet Ballistic Liner and Suspension System (BLSS) Kit, and other individual protective equipment. The new PPE gear will increase survivability in a hostile combat environment and furnish the best available to America's Builder Warriors.

(Right) Seabee battalions are beginning to receive new tactical gear. All active and reserve Seabees will eventually have this career issue of gear which includes the Ballistic Liner and Suspension System (BLSS) headset, Modular Lightweight Load-bearing Equipment (MOLLE), and the new Military Assault Kit (MAK) first aid package.

Photo by Daryl Smith, 1NCD



SPRING2007



## Seabee HISTORY

**W**hile it would be virtually impossible to capture 65 years of Seabee history on two pages in a magazine, we have provided a snapshot of significant dates spanning the last six-plus decades. As you scan these highlights, the 'Can Do' spirit of our Builder Warriors is poised to begin the next chapters of the Seabee story.

Top (left to right)

**Admiral Ben Moreell, Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks and 'Father of the Seabees,' c. 1946.**

**Seabees at Normandy, June 1944.**

**U.S. Marines's sign honoring Seabees, Papua New Guinea, c. 1943.**

**Korean War-era Seabees, c. 1950s.**

**Seabees conducting survey work, c. 1943.**

Bottom (left to right)

**Operation Enduring Freedom "Camp X-Ray" holding facility for detainees at Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, 2002.**

**Security perimeter in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom near Fallujah, Iraq, 2004.**

**Operation Lifeline earthquake relief, Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, 2005.**

**Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, Gulfport, Miss., 2005.**

**USS Stethem (DDG 63) and Philippine Navy Special Operations Group (NAVSOG) training exercise, Philippines, 2006.**

Photos courtesy of U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Port Hueneme, Calif.




---

★ ★ March 5, 1942 — Seabees established ★ ★

---

March 13, 1942 — Camp Allen commissioned as first Seabee training station in Norfolk, Va.

March 19, 1942 — CEC officers given military authority over construction units

Aug. 11, 1942 — Camp Endicott commissioned in Davisville, RI, as original home of the Seabees

Sept. 1, 1942 — 6<sup>th</sup> NCB arrives in Guadalcanal, first Seabees to enter a combat zone

Oct. 16, 1942 — Eight Seabees of the 6<sup>th</sup> NCB killed at Guadalcanal, first Seabees killed in action

Nov. 26, 1942 — Seabees land in North Africa with American assault forces

### 1943

June 30, 1943 — Seabees land with 9<sup>th</sup> Marine Division on Solomon Islands

### 1944

Feb. 19, 1944 — Seabees land with 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division at Iwo Jima

June 6, 1944 — Seabees land at Normandy as Naval combat Demolition Units

June 15, 1944 — Seabees land on Saipan

July 26, 1944 — Seabees land on Tinian





# SIGNIFICANT DATES



## 1945

March 22, 1945 — Seabees ferry GEN Patton's armored units across the Rhine River into Germany

April 1, 1945 — Seabees land on Okinawa

## 1947

Dec. 31, 1947 — Seabee Reserves established

## 1950

Sept. 15, 1950 — Seabees land at Inchon, Korea

## 1965

May 7, 1965 — NMCB 10 is first battalion to deploy to Chu Lai, Vietnam

May 28, 1965 — NMCB 3 is first battalion to deploy to Da Nang, Vietnam

June 10, 1965 — CM3 Marvin Shields killed at Dong Xoai, Vietnam, and earns the Medal of Honor

## 1974

May 27, 1974 — Seabee Memorial dedicated at Arlington, Va.

## 1985

June 15, 1985 — SW2 (DV) Robert Stethem killed by terrorists in Beirut and posthumously awarded the Bronze Star

## 1995

Oct. 21, 1995 — USS Stethem commissioned in honor of SW2 (DV) Robert Stethem

## 2001

Nov. 28, 2001 — First members of NMCB 133 arrive at Camp Rhino, Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom

## 2002

Aug. 9, 2002 — 1<sup>st</sup> Naval Construction Division established at Little Creek, Va.

## 2003

March 21, 2003 — Seabees cross the line of departure into Iraq with the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force during Operation Iraqi Freedom

April 10, 2003 — Seabees cross the Diyala River into Baghdad, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom

## 2004

May 2, 2004 — Five Seabees from NMCB 14 killed in mortar attack near Ramadi, Iraq

## 2005

Aug. 29, 2005 — Hurricane Katrina strikes the Gulf Coast. More than 3,000 Seabees supported recovery efforts throughout the area

## 2006

July 18, 2006 — U.S. Navy approves the establishment of the 25<sup>th</sup> NCR and NMCB 11 to be headquartered at CBC, Gulfport, Miss.

---

★ March 5, 2007 — Seabees mark 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ★

---



## NECC

## EXPANDING THE MARITIME



Seabees comprise the largest part of the NECC force and are heavily engaged throughout the world. To meet this high operational demand, the Navy has funded and INCD is forming a ninth active Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) and a third active Naval Construction Regiment (NCR). The ninth battalion allows the Seabees to be on the same rotation as the rest of the Navy — six months deployed and 12 months in homeport training.

January 13, 2007 marked the one-year anniversary of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC), an organization that continues to grow and is now an integrated expeditionary force of almost 40,000 Sailors. This expeditionary force is comprised of long-standing Navy units including the Seabees, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Navy Expeditionary Logistics, Naval Coastal Warfare and Combat Camera Atlantic, and new units such as Riverine, Maritime Civil Affairs, Expeditionary Training and Expeditionary Readiness.

NECC professionals are in heavy demand performing a variety of missions around the globe, whether providing security on the North Arabian Gulf oil platforms, conducting counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED) operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, performing customs inspections in Kuwait, or drilling and developing potable water wells in Horn of Africa villages.

The post-9/11 world and the Global War on Terror demonstrated the increasing importance of the Navy's expeditionary capability as a complement to the open ocean maritime battlespace. Additionally, the Navy recognized a need to expand our core maritime capabilities into the coastal and inland environments to fill warfighting gaps in the maritime domain.

In his 2006 Guidance, Chief of Naval Operations ADM Mike Mullen charged us to address readiness and establish a more effective maritime protection strategy. He said:

“Develop concepts for green and brown water operations to include Level III Visit, Board, Search and Seizure, expanded Maritime Interdiction Operation, expeditionary training team concepts, enhanced combat and force protection capabilities, civil affairs, and Theater Security Cooperation influence activities.”

As the Navy's newest type commander, NECC aligned existing capabilities under one functional commander, responsible for providing our expeditionary forces with the right people, equipment and training to effectively operate in the expeditionary maritime environment. Toward this objective the NECC staff, in conjunction with NECC units, is working on taking advantage of commonalities in equipment, logistics and training to create better efficiency and warfighting effectiveness. As we survey the landscape we see great possibilities of improving the overall force by creating a common combat skills “A” school; sharing training ranges and simulators; consolidating unit logistic support in geographical areas; and maintaining interoperability of equipment and communications gear.





# BATTLESPACE...ONE YEAR LATER

By CAPT George Eichert, CEC, Chief of Staff, NECC

**NECC is also building a continuum of new capabilities unique to the expeditionary maritime environment to support our joint forces. The demand signal for these new capabilities is strong and include:**

## **RIVERINE:**

We stood up Riverine Group ONE and three riverine squadrons (RIVRON) in the Hampton Roads, Va., area. RIVRON ONE is fully manned and equipped and completed its deployment certification training; it deploys later this year. RIVRON TWO has begun training and RIVRON THREE is being manned. ▼



## **MARITIME CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

This group will work directly with local civil authorities and civilian populations in the maritime environment and be capable of handling specialty issues, such as maritime law, marine fisheries, port operations, security and administration, port customs and maritime immigration, in addition to standard civil affairs-type issues. Two squadrons are completing regional, cultural and language training, with trained teams at initial operational capability by this summer.

## **EXPEDITIONARY COMBAT READINESS CENTER (ECRC):**

In October 2006, ECRC stood up, functioning as the single process owner for training, equipping, deploying and redeploying our more than 7,000 individual augmentee (IA), Ad-Hoc and In Lieu Of (ILO) forces serving around the globe. ECRC's support to our IA, Ad-Hoc and ILO forces extends to their loved ones back home as well. ECRC maintains a family readiness site (<http://www.ecrc.navy.mil/>) that provides a conduit for communication, resource and referral working alongside Fleet & Family Support Center and regional/national OMBUDSMAN. In addition, family members can call the toll-free IA family care line, (1-877-364-4302), accessible 24/7. ▼



## **EXPEDITIONARY TRAINING COMMAND (ETC):**

ETC will be a deployable force to assess, coordinate and, in some cases, provide customized training in expeditionary maritime capabilities, such as small boat operations and port security to partner nations. These training teams, which will be ready to deploy this summer, will play an important part in the Chief of Naval Operations' "1,000 Ship Navy" vision.



## **MARITIME EXPEDITIONARY SECURITY FORCE (MESF):**

MESF will re-align existing Navy Security Force and Naval Coastal Warfare units into an integrated maritime security force. These scalable security teams will be capable of defending mission-critical assets in the near-coast environment, provide ground and afloat defense, along with a wide range of tasks such as detention operations and law enforcement. ▲

One of NECC's goals is to develop an expeditionary warfare career path for officers and enlisted, allowing the development of a cadre of seasoned professionals with expeditionary skill sets. Toward this end, the EOD and Diver communities were established as their own separate ratings in 2006. Additionally, we established the Expeditionary Warfare Specialist (EXW) program to recognize the core warfighting expertise and competencies we need in our expeditionary Sailors. RADM Donald Bullard, NECC Commander, awarded the first EXW pin to a Sailor — Master at Arms 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Carl P. Hurtt Jr, Mobile Security Squadron (MSS) 7 — in Guam in December.

Although NECC is a new organization, most of NECC's missions are not new. They are traditional Navy missions in a new environment. We will continue to expand and enhance our capabilities to meet the demands of the Combatant Commanders and the Naval Component Commanders, while working to ensure our expeditionary Sailors are fully trained, equipped and ready to meet those demands.

*For additional information on NECC, visit [www.necc.navy.mil](http://www.necc.navy.mil).*

# 2006 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

### Operation Iraqi Freedom/ Operation Enduring Freedom

Multiple Seabee battalions continued contingency operations throughout Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan in direct support of 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and Special Operations Forces (SOF) efforts. Projects included construction of base camps; road, airfield and bridge repairs; building renovations (including electrical and force protection upgrades); and construction of hardened dining facilities. Task-organized units of various sizes provided force protection and mission support projects (such as hardened galleys, Davidson buildings, SWA huts, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) clearance and surgical facilities) at established camps and expeditionary Forward Operating Bases.

### Horn of Africa (HOA)

One hundred twenty-five Seabees supported Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) HOA. Projects included drilling water wells, school improvements in Balbala, tent

camps and latrine facilities in Ethiopia, along with flood recovery operations.

### CARAT 06 Exercise

Thirty personnel from NMCB 1 conducted an Engineering Civic Action Program (ENCAP) in Indonesia and the Philippines during July and August. In addition, 30 personnel from NMCB 40 conducted an ENCAP in Thailand during June. Projects included a multi-purpose building and schoolhouse.

### Exercise ULCHI FOCUS LENS

Nearly 100 active duty and reserve Seabees participated in Exercise ULCHI FOCUS LENS on the Korean peninsula, which refined concept of operations and practiced division level command and control in a combined joint environment.

### New Horizons (Honduras)

Seventeen Seabees from NMCB 7 constructed a two-room schoolhouse addition in Honduras from February through May.

### New Horizons (Peru 06)

From July through September, 50 Seabees from NMCB 5 built two CMU buildings and drilled three water wells in Peru.

### Provisional Detainee Battalion Suse

One hundred fifty members of NMCB 1 relieved members of NMCB 4 continuing the mission in Suse. After completing military training at Fort Bliss, Texas, the unit deployed in early June to Kuwait for additional training in preparation for detainee handling requirements overseas.

### USNS MERCY, Civic Action Team

(Theater Security Cooperation Plans/TSCP)

NMCB 40 deployed 14 personnel from April to September aboard USNS Mercy. They conducted site surveys of medical clinics in Bangladesh, Philippines, Indonesia and East Timor as part of the Mercy's MEDCAP deployment, and provided facility improvements at ashore medical clinics utilized by Mercy staff. ▼

Seabees assigned to NMCB 40, including BU2 Shane Murray (left) and UT2 Thomas Walton, help renovate Sulu Provincial Hospital while deployed with the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) Hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19). NMCB 40 participated in a five-month humanitarian assistance deployment on the USNS Mercy to South and Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands.

Photo by MCS Joseph Caballero







## VADM Loose, RADM Cellon Pin on Another Star

Vice Admiral Michael K. Loose was promoted to his present rank on January 31 by the Chief of Naval Operations ADM Michael Mullen and assumed the billet of Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Fleet Readiness and Logistics). VADM Loose relieved VADM J. D. McCarthy, who had been serving as Office of the Chief of Naval Operations N4 since June 2004.

Admiral Loose is the 17<sup>th</sup> flag officer to hold the OPNAV N4 position, and only the second staff corps officer to do so. He is also the first Civil Engineer Corps officer to be promoted to vice admiral since the legendary Ben Moreell was promoted to full Admiral on June 11, 1946.

Among his many assignments, VADM Loose has served as Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers; Commander, NAVFAC Atlantic Division and Fleet Civil Engineer, Commander U.S. Atlantic Fleet; and Vice Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Deputy Chief of Civil Engineers.

Commander, NAVFAC Atlantic, Richard Cellon received his second star at NAVFAC Headquarters from RADM Greg Shear, NAVFAC Commander and Chief of Civil Engineers on February 1.

**(Top Left) CNO ADM Michael Mullen (right) shakes hands with VADM Michael Loose after his promotion.**

U.S. Navy photo

**(Top Right) RADM Greg Shear (left) congratulates RADM Richard Cellon following his promotion.**

Photo by NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs



## RDML Handley Newest CEC Flag Officer

Rear Admiral (lower half) Mark A. Handley, Deputy Commander, Commander Naval Installations Command (CNIC) is the Civil Engineer Corps' newest flag officer. RDML Handley was promoted to his current rank by CNIC Commander VADM Robert T. Conway Jr., in a ceremony at NAVFAC Headquarters.

**(Below) RDML Mark Handley (right) is commended by VADM Robert Conway during his promotion ceremony.**

Photo by CNIC Public Affairs





# GWOT UPDATE

## Seabees Repair Runway at Logistics Hub

By Lance Cpl. Ben Eberle, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Logistics Group

Camp Taqaddum is considered the logistics “hub” of Iraq due to its existing infrastructure and proximity to major supply routes, but the base’s single runway has presented somewhat of a logistical challenge.

“It’s the largest Seabee project in Iraq,” said Chief Petty Officer Anthony Chance, operations manager for NMCB 74, 3<sup>rd</sup> NCR, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) Forward.

Many factors contributed to the runway damage, including American ordnance.

Allied forces initially attacked Al Taqaddum air base in January 1991 during Operation Desert Storm. They struck again at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, crippling Saddam Hussein’s logistical and offensive capabilities through precision air strikes on the airfield.

Since the coalition takeover in 2003, indirect fire from insurgents and heavy air traffic going through the base had resulted in more damage, Chance said.

Repairing the inoperative runway and the conjoining taxiways ends the delays and

increases airline traffic from around the world, including Kuwait, Germany, Turkey and the United States. This will increase the flow of supplies into the Iraqi theater and boost the warfighters’ effectiveness, he added.

More than 60 Seabees and Marines worked in shifts around the clock to repair the airfield.

Manning heavy equipment through inclement weather requires constant safety awareness, said Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jeffrey C. Littlefield, a quality control/safety supervisor, NMCB 74.

“If one man is injured, the whole project would [have been] delayed,” said Littlefield. “Safety is paramount, and we look out for each other.”

Another consideration is maintaining the heavy equipment, and the Seabees have plenty of it. NMCB 74 uses 96 pieces of “rolling stock,” such as bulldozers and forklifts, and 11 concrete saws.

“Heavy equipment is made for running (nonstop), but our equipment is older,” said Chief Petty Officer Tyler A. Watters, mechanics supervisor with NMCB 74.

Watters said that running simple maintenance checks, such as checking oil and other fluids, helps avoid breakdowns, but he added that the unit’s mechanics can also make major repairs.

“Major or minor problems, we take care of them,” said Watters. “I have a young crew, but they do a really good job.”

The ‘young crew’ benefits greatly from the joint-service environment, said Staff Sgt. Chris J. Haggerty, heavy-equipment operations supervisor, 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Support Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Logistics Group (Forward).

“It’s been a good experience for everyone,” said Haggerty. “A lot of the junior sailors have never worked with Marines before.”

The job can be messy, and trudging through wet concrete isn’t very welcoming when wind chills approach 20 degrees. But the team welcomes the challenge and continues to work through increasingly harsh conditions.

“We have a job as Seabees. We build, we fight — in that order,” said Chance. “We owe it to the warfighters to get them every tool necessary to accomplish their mission out there, kicking down doors and getting the bad guys.”


NMCB 74

NMCB 74 Seabees level wet concrete on a section of runway at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, in early December. The team poured approximately 20 truckloads of cement per day which is more cement than most Seabees see during an entire deployment, according to Chief Petty Officer Anthony Chance, operations chief for NMCB 74.

USMC photo by Lance Cpl. Ben Eberle





A large group of Seabees in military uniforms and hard hats are working on a large concrete surface, likely a runway or taxiway. They are using various tools and equipment, including a large metal frame and a long-handled tool. The scene is outdoors under bright sunlight.

NMCB 74 Seabees, along with a group of Marine engineers, finish repairs on 10 miles of runway and taxiways at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, in early 2007.

USMC photo by Lance Cpl. Ben Eberle

## NMCB 74 Empowers Iraqi Police

*By MC2 Gregory N. Juday, NMCB 74*

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74 aided members of the Iraqi Police in late November by providing much-needed electrical work at the police station in Zangora, a small town on the outskirts of Ramadi. The policemen in Zangora had been without electricity for an extended period of time and had been anxiously awaiting power for lighting and heat. Most recently, they were trying to fend off cold desert nights with electric heaters.

"We practically had to rewire the entire compound," said Construction Electrician 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Jumoke Freitas, NMCB 74. "Now they will have lights, electrical outlets, heating and A/C units."

Like many projects in the area, NMCB 74 went beyond the original tasking and provided more structures with electricity.

The Seabees did experience a few obstacles along the way, such as faulty wiring in previously wired structures. However, they worked diligently until the mission was completed.

"It was a mess once you opened the junction boxes or actually looked at the inside of an outlet box," said Builder 1<sup>st</sup> Class Douglas Bennett. "It took some extra time, but they will have power. That is why we're here."

**BU1 Douglas Bennett, NMCB 74, removes the faceplate of a breaker box while working on the electrical system at an Iraqi police station. Seabees from NMCB 74 assist Marines, as well as Iraqi police and soldiers, on the front lines in Ramadi by upgrading living conditions and establishing new combat outposts throughout the area.**

Photo by MC2 Gregory N. Juday



# Purple Hearts

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the U.S. armed forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action.



The following Seabees were wounded in action\* while deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom:

**SWC William Bell** (NMCB 74)  
**CE2 Lucas Gallagher** (NMCB 40)  
**CE2 Adam Paben** (NMCB 40)

**CM3 Curtis Cox** (NMCB 40)  
**CM2 Daniel Haning** (NMCB 4)

*\* At time of publication*

## Injured Seabee Fund

### Special Fund Helps Seabees Take Care of Seabees

*By UCCM (SCW) Brian Farricy,  
Seabee Readiness, NAVFAC  
Headquarters*

As the Global War on Terror rages on, Seabees continue to be at the forefront. Our necessary and vital participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in support of combat operations has proven itself over and over again. Since the beginning of the war in March 2003, Seabees have reinforced the 'Can Do' spirit and continue to be the Engineering Force of choice. As current demand dictates new mission requirements along with varying deployment locations, Seabee units find themselves in increasingly dangerous situations. Unfortunately, along with ever-increasing participation is our ever-increasing vulnerability to injury.

When injured Seabees return from theatre, they arrive at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland where the 89th Medical Squadron receives and transports all personnel to a holding facility. There they await transportation to either Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C., Bethesda National Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland, or Balboa Naval Hospital, in San Diego, Calif.

During the hospital stay, it is especially critical for our Seabees to know they are valued members of an organization and to know how important they are to us and to

our country. Each Seabee is visited by the Chief of Civil Engineers, Force Master Chief or me. Since our community is small, the lack of contact with other Seabees can be even more of a hardship. The friendship and camaraderie established are critical in developing lifelong relationships and loyalty, one of the foundations of being a Seabee. The opportunity to speak with other Seabees is sometimes all that is needed to put someone at ease. During one of my visits, the sentiment I felt from a particular wounded Seabee was, "Thank God, a fellow Seabee — someone who understands."

Many of us have experienced firsthand the determination, courage and loyalty of these troops. While all Seabees are leaders, we as their leaders must send a clear message that we care and have a genuine concern for them and their families. I believe this is one of the most important attributes a leader can convey to his or her troops. The small sacrifice for one Seabee to take time for another goes far beyond duty — it is the right thing to do — and believe me, it is greatly appreciated.

It was under this premise that Force Master Chief Jim Fairbanks established the Injured Seabee Fund. When we visited wounded Seabees and Sailors at Bethesda Naval Hospital, it was quite apparent something was missing. Other members' spaces were adorned with service-related items, sending a clear message to visitors of who was recuperating in that room and what

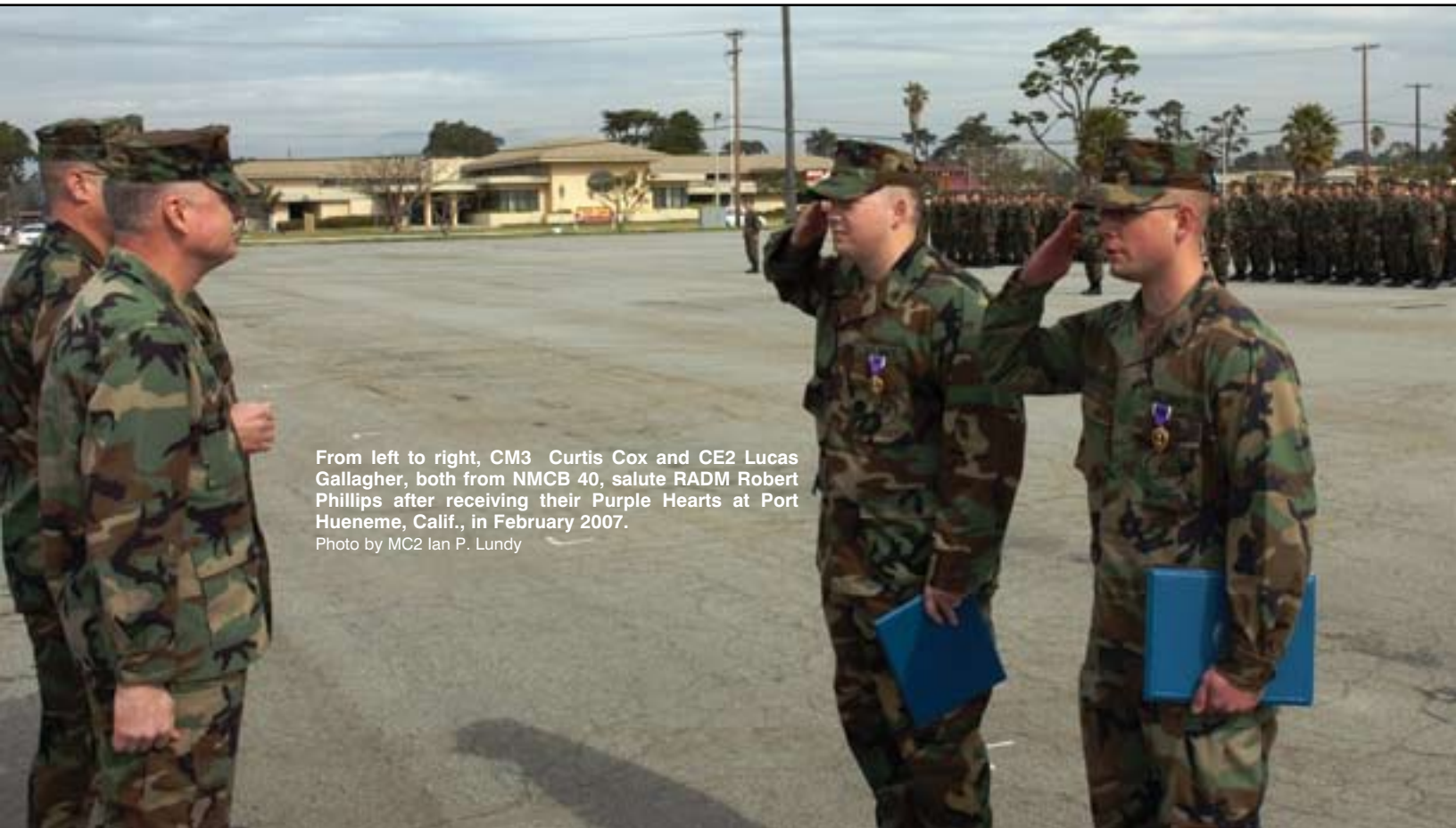
branch of the service he or she represented. A strong sense of belonging is a major motivational tool, and when you are part of a team it is meaningful to be recognized as a member of that team.

So, with the help of Seabee Chief Petty Officer Messes and First and Second Class Associations we started a fund to provide our Seabees some well-deserved and much-needed esprit de corps — Seabee memorabilia, flags, blankets, etc. This is also an opportunity to let our troops know that we have not forgotten about them. Although the Injured Seabee Fund is in its infancy, and as we continue to solicit donations from the Naval Construction Force Command, as well as throughout the military and civilian community, we envision far greater things than blankets and flags. As with any foundation or legacy, you start small and build to the future. Of course, our hope is that a fund such as this one would never even have to be a thought, but as we fight to maintain freedom and eliminate terrorism we all understand the risk.

It's the same simple premise I spoke of earlier — having and showing a genuine concern for our fellow comrades. Seabees and Sailors taking care of each other — what a novel idea.

*Note: For additional information on the Injured Seabee Fund, contact UCCM Brian Farricy at (202) 685-9276 or [brian.farricy@navy.mil](mailto:brian.farricy@navy.mil).*





From left to right, CM3 Curtis Cox and CE2 Lucas Gallagher, both from NMCB 40, salute RADM Robert Phillips after receiving their Purple Hearts at Port Hueneme, Calif., in February 2007.

Photo by MC2 Ian P. Lundy

## Seabee Wounded in Combat Returns Home for the Holidays

By LCDR Kyra Hawn, 22<sup>nd</sup> NCR Public Affairs



U.S. Navy photo

Chief Steelworker (SCW) William Bell, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74 returned from Iraq on December 22, and was met with cheers and gratitude from more than 100 local service members, Seabee family members and veterans who crowded the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport.

Bell, who was seriously injured in early December in a mortar attack on the forward operating base where he worked, was grateful to be home but even more grateful to be alive.

"I wouldn't wish this upon my worst enemy, but I know that I have been kept alive for a purpose and I intend to honor that gift to the best of my ability," said Bell in a phone interview prior to his return.

The same mortar attack took the lives of

two Navy corpsmen.

"I remember shouting for medical assistance when I saw my shipmates down, but at that point I didn't know how bad it was. I was in shock myself and couldn't have told you whether or not my injuries were life-threatening. You work hard over there, you do your job and you just focus on the mission," Bell said.

Having sustained a serious injury to his leg and thigh, and lacerations up one side of his body, Bell was relieved to learn that the quick work of corpsmen stabilized his condition and saved his leg from amputation.

"I can't say 'thank you' enough to the people who dragged me out of there and patched me up," he expressed.

After his medical evacuation to Germany and subsequent transfer to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., Bell was reunited with his wife and daughter.

"The hardest part was hearing what he had gone through, but not being able to see him or look into his eyes to know how he was really doing," reflected Bell's wife, Brooke.

As Brooke wheeled her husband down the jetway in Miss., a young Air Force Airman called members of the military in the terminal to attention. Friends, family, civilians and military gave Bell a standing ovation and waved American flags.

"I didn't get this kind of reception when I returned from Vietnam," remarked an older gentleman, "but I sure am glad that we're doing right by our service members today."

When asked what message Bell had for members of his unit still deployed to Iraq, Bell said, "I just want them to stay safe, and I want them to know that I'm okay. I don't need anybody worrying about me. They are the ones we need to be thinking about, and praying for their safe return."

Bell will undergo multiple additional surgeries and expects to convalesce for an additional six months or more.

"My goal is to be on my feet to greet the plane when my unit returns [to Gulfport]," Bell said optimistically.



# Individual Augmentee

## NAVFAC Europe-bound Seabee worked as one to help many in Iraq

*Submitted by Norris Jones, Gulf Region Central District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

**A**s a Seabee, Lt. Carl Kirar helped manage construction projects in one of the most volatile areas in Iraq. And while on the ground in Al Anbar Province, he was not attached to a regiment or battalion.

In Iraq, Lt. Kirar worked as an Individual Augmentee (IA) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) helping oversee projects that ranged from the installation of an \$80 million city-wide sewer system in Fallujah, to the construction of new schools for all age groups in Ramadi, to the repair and upgrade of power transmission lines serving the entire area. In this position, he served as Deputy Officer in Charge of USACE's Al Anbar Area Office.

"While the strong dose of serving in one of this war zone's most dangerous areas had sometimes disheartened me, I have seen and met some very intelligent, motivated and heroic Iraqis trying to do what they could to build a better future for their families," Kirar said. "There is hope in this country and our efforts here are supporting it."

He had high praise for the hundreds of troops who patrol that area. "Every time I

saw young Marines and Army soldiers going outside the gate, I knew they voluntarily put themselves in danger and routinely risked their lives for a cause greater than their own," Kirar said.

"U.S. forces have been working very hard to help out the Iraqis, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently taken more direct steps to understand the Iraqi way of contracting by partnering with the Department of State to obtain Iraqi-American engineers who can bridge that cultural and language gap," he said. "All in all I have been humbled by this experience. Everyone there is working hard to help out the Iraqis, get them on their feet and get us back home."

Kirar worked shoulder to shoulder with the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force (IMEF) to improve key essential services so Iraqis see firsthand that their government is working and things are getting better.

"Both as a civil engineer and as a Navy Seabee, this assignment was one of the most professionally and personally rewarding of my career," Kirar said.

Returning home in mid-January, Kirar

found his time in Iraq to be challenging. However, he's confident that somewhere down the road "the seeds of freedom we're planting now will turn into shade trees of peace in the future."

### INDIVIDUAL AUGMENTEES

**Lt. Carl Kirar is one of more than 10,000 Sailors on Individual Augmentee (IA) duty assignments all over the world. Through IAs, the Navy is able to expand its contribution on the ground in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility since the war on terror is a national fight, not just one for the Army and Marine Corps.**

According to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) ADM Mike Mullen, IA deployments are critical to the Navy's efforts in the Global War on Terror.

"I see this as a long-term commitment by the Navy," Mullen said. "I'm anxious to pitch in as much as we possibly can, for the duration of this war. Not only can we do our share, but [we can] take as much stress off those who are deploying back-to-back, home one year, deployed one year and now on their third or fourth deployment."

Personnel officials estimate that nearly half the 4,300 Sailors serving in Iraq are IAs.



**LT Carl Kirar, an Individual Augmentee (IA), served with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as Deputy Officer in Charge of the Al Anbar Area Office.**

U.S. Navy photo



# Building Battle Positions

“It’s a lot like what I imagine the guys did in World War II, when the Marines would take an island, set up a couple tents, and the Seabees would roll in and build a whole city for them.”

— BU1 (SCW) Vincent Del Signore, NMCB 25

**Seabees of NMCB 25 carefully build a stairway leading to a new security post in Iraq.**  
Photo by BU1 (SCW) Vincent Del Signore

## Seabees Support Marines and Iraqis at Battle Positions

Before returning home late last year, Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 25 completed months of work in support of Marines and Iraqi soldiers at battle positions (BPs) in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. NMCB 25 is a Reserve Battalion based out of Fort McCoy, Wisc.

“The BPs allow Marines to move into an area where they can interact with the populace, help protect them and bring the fight to the enemy,” said Chief Construction Electrician (SCW/SW) Dan Delaney, Officer in Charge of this Seabee detachment. “They (Marines) were pretty effective at getting out into the towns, talking to the people and finding out who was there to support the government.”

When Marines arrive at a new site, they quickly establish a perimeter around the BP since force protection is a primary objective. They also rapidly build living quarters to provide shelter from indirect fire. The next tasks include training Iraqi soldiers and conducting joint operations in the surrounding area, so living conditions remain minimal at best.

“The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Marines and 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marines, built them (BPs) as best they could, under the circumstances,” said Builder 1<sup>st</sup> Class (SCW) Vincent Del Signore. “But, they needed the Seabees because we had the technical skills, equipment and raw materials to improve these sites.”

Work required at the BPs ranged from extensive construction projects to overhaul-

ing electrical systems. Common problems included access to running water for showers and electricity for fans, lights and computers.

A major relief for the Marines and Iraqi soldiers was the installation of air conditioning units where they sleep. Air conditioning may sound like a small matter, but strenuous work in high temperature regions can affect body strength. More than 600 units were installed during the operation.

“You have to remember [that] June, July and August in Iraq [are] very hot [months],” said Del Signore. “Life for the Marines up there is basically being a beat cop. They go on foot patrols and they’ve got their first aid kit, tactical vest, weapons, spare ammo and lots of water — everything they’re

*(continued on next page)*



## Building Battle Positions

*(continued from previous page)*  
going to need out there.

"If they aren't eating, sleeping or manning an observation post around the perimeter, then they're patrolling the cities on foot," he continued.

The BPs have earned the nicknames "Wild West" and "Fort Apache" for a reason. Resources, including manpower, are very limited. Seabees make use of their training and expertise, but also find themselves improvising to make life more comfortable for the Marines. At one BP, Marines took showers by standing outside and dumping bottled water over their heads.

"We built a little room with two showers and hooked up a running water supply," said Del Signore. "The Marines loved that. We also built two sinks with mirrors for shaving and even hooked up a small washing machine."

The Seabees worked on a score of BPs in the area. "We built galleys if they needed them," said Delaney. "All the work the Seabees did was not only for the Marines, but also for the Iraqi Army that worked right inside the same camps. A lot of times we were working side by side with the Iraqis."

Seabees had scores of stories to tell about how they helped these coalition forces with projects beyond the initial assessment: building stairways and hardened observation posts, weatherproofing doors and windows, and securing buildings.

"Insurgents used many of these buildings early in the war before the Marines came through and drove them out," said Del Signore. "Since then, the Marines have occupied the damaged buildings. They patched holes with whatever they could find, including cardboard, which was probably the best they could do."

"The Seabees have the skilled labor, tools and materials so we re-secured the windows, patched up the holes and rebuilt the doors so that each building was actually weather tight and suitable for air conditioning."

In true Seabee fashion, every BP was finished ahead of schedule.

"It was great work, which is what Seabee

work is supposed to be," Delaney said, "working outside the wire and working right alongside the Marines."

"Going out to the battle positions and working directly for the Marine infantry was the time where I felt that I was doing the job that Seabees were originally intended to do — going out to the forward areas to where the Marines are — as close to what you could call the front line in a war that really doesn't have a front — and being able to make the kind of differences that matter to them," said Del Signore.

He continued, "It's a lot like what I imagine the guys did in World War II, when the Marines would take an island, set up a couple tents, and the Seabees would roll in and build a whole city for them."

Del Signore's father was in the Marine Corps during the Korean War and his grandfather was in the Marine Corps during World War II.

"I had heard stories from them when I was growing up about when they were in the war. Things wouldn't be very nice where they were and the Seabees would come in and all of a sudden they would have galleys, sleeping quarters and places to work," he said.

Del Signore said he thought about that a lot when they were improving security and living conditions at the battle positions.

"Maybe someday one of those Marines will tell his kids or grandkids about how he was in Iraq during the war and the Seabees showed up and made things better," he added.



**Seabees replaced an unstable ladder that the Marines were using daily with a solid stairway. NMCB 25 Seabees supported Marines at battle positions throughout Western Iraq with security and quality of life improvements.**

Photos by BU1 (SCW) Vincent Del Signore







BUCS Jon Koenig, NMCB 18, prepares to distribute some of the many boxes received through *Care Packages for the Marines*. So far, more than 2,000 care packages have reached Marines on the other side of the world.

U.S. Navy photo

## Seabee Delivers for Marines

By LTJG Chris Wolpert, NMCB 18

**C**are Packages for the Marines started out like many ideas — small and with modest expectations, just trying to make a difference. Within weeks, it developed into a success beyond all expectations, explained Senior Chief Builder Jon Koenig, program founder and its biggest advocate.

Koenig, recently deployed to Iraq with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 18, started the program to provide basic goods to Marines remotely stationed and living under fairly austere conditions. Even some of the most basic services are not available on a regular basis in Iraq, such as showers and heaters, explained Koenig.

So, he decided to do something to enhance their quality of life.

“I wrote to my wife back home, and she put the word out to family and friends requesting that non-perishable foods, non-breakable mirrors, hygiene items, games and reading materials be sent to Iraq,” Koenig said.

He estimated 200-300 packages by the end of January 2007; in reality, it was closer to six times that number.

Koenig initially received more than 1,500 care packages. “Before our deployment is over, we expect to receive more than 2,000 packages,” said Koenig. Not bad for a program originally intended to reach only a few hundred Marines. “I am overwhelmed by the generosity back home.”

An interesting twist to the program was that Koenig received most packages from people he had never met. His ‘surprise’ contributors ranged from the Jewish War Veterans of America to M. G. Skinner & Associates, a California insurance company which amassed over \$6,000 for care package goods.

And it didn’t stop there. “Somebody contacted suppliers, who then sent things to us directly,” he added.

After the products come in, Koenig packaged them and sent them on convoys to Marines throughout the area of opera-

tions. At one location where **NMCB 18** shelters are being constructed, Marines are finding more than just improved lodging.

“As each shelter is finished, they are stocked with care packages, almost like house-warming welcome gifts,” Koenig explained. “Not everyone back home is in a position to directly help in the war effort, so their way of helping is to send these care packages. I see many repeat senders now,” he said.

Koenig’s spirit of giving goes beyond this project. He has taken on other volunteer projects as well, such as building 100 “stents” or steel tents for the Boy Scouts to replace old canvas tents. For his efforts, he earned the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

For many Marines in Iraq, their morale has been positively affected by Koenig’s work. “We should always be engaged in good causes wherever we find ourselves,” he said. “It is a rewarding way of life.”



# Warrior Transition Program

## Program Helps Seabees Adjust to Life on the Homefront

Seabees returning from duty in Iraq benefit from a unique program designed to help them transition back to life at home.

A collaboration of chaplains, medical personnel and Fleet Family Support Centers, the Warrior Transition Program is designed to reduce the effects of deployment and combat stress, focusing on body, mind and spirit. It is recognized as the most comprehensive transition program in

the military and is being studied by Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) and Fleet Forces Command to serve as the model for the rest of the Navy.

Under this program, Camp Moreell, Kuwait is used as a transition area for Seabees returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Here, the Seabees spend three to five days in a safe area and attend group sessions and classes where they

can relax, reflect on their experiences in Iraq and think about how they will talk about these experiences with their families, friends and others when they return home.

"In Kuwait we have a window of opportunity because once they are back in the states, they are focused on other things," said CAPT John Wohlrabe, Chaplain for the 1<sup>st</sup> Naval Construction Division (1NCD). He explained that it is especially important for reserves to have this opportunity at Camp Moreell, where chaplains and medical personnel are on hand, because reserve members may not have

easy access to that kind of support when they return to their individual hometowns. The Seabees are the only branch of the military to use such a transitional area for this purpose.

"This was one of the lessons of Vietnam," Wohlrabe explained. During previous wars, soldiers returned home by ship where they had time to discuss their experiences with fellow service members before arriving home. There was no formal program in place, but the slow trip home allowed time to decompress and hash out issues with each other. But during the Vietnam War, soldiers returned home by air so they did not have that transition time. "I tell my groups that this is their slow boat," he said.

During this period of several days, Seabees turn in their weapons and other gear and are allowed to wear shorts, tee shirts and tennis shoes. They are placed in groups of 20 to 25 of their peers where they consider what they have learned from both negative and positive aspects of their deployment, how they will avoid bringing negative feelings home, adjustments and return to homeport, and reunions with family. They are also told where they can go for help if they have lingering problems readjusting to life back home.

"We let them know that the next 30 days will be a time of adjustment," Wohlrabe said. "But, if problems persist we advise them to get help."

A variety of military and local resources are discussed. For example, Military OneSource (1-800-540-4123 or [Militaryonesource.com](http://Militaryonesource.com)) will put military personnel in touch with counseling services in their area. The service allows for six free sessions (not reported on the individual's record). >

**BU3 Mark Dyas, NMCB 133, reunites with his son at the Air National Guard Training Center in Gulfport, Miss. NMCB 133 and other detachments were forward deployed to Central Command areas of responsibility in support of the Global War on Terror.**

Photo by MC2 Gregory N. Juday







### **RADM Shear visits Camp Fallujah**

BU1 Eric C. Files (left), NMCB 18, receives praise from RADM Greg Shear, Commander, NAVFAC, and Chief of Civil Engineers, for his collateral duty as a gunner for his battalion's Convoy Security Team. Files' team escorted RADM Shear during his visit to the 3<sup>rd</sup> NCR, IMEF and other commands aboard Camp Fallujah, Iraq, in January.

Photo by YN2 Monte Tolar

Other resources include the VA Center, ombudsman, base chaplain, medical, Fleet and Family Support Center, American Red Cross, church, civilian medical and social services.

Wohlraabe explained that Seabees often develop deep friendships with their fellow service members, so they also spend time discussing how they will maintain contact with each other. This is especially important for reserves, who may not see each other for some time.

Other classes include safety, medical exposure, suicide and domestic violence prevention, and combat stress issues.

Reservists also receive classes on demobilization and benefits.

In addition to the sessions in Kuwait, the program includes a pre-deployment briefing and a post-deployment follow-up.

The Warrior Transition Program had its beginnings during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) I when the Chief of Chaplains directed the Chaplain Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO) to develop a program to help the Marines returning from Iraq in dealing with their experiences. At that time, the CREDO program consisted of only a PowerPoint presentation.

Wohlraabe first began using this presentation with NMCB 23 and set up classes with chaplains and medical personnel for about 50 Seabees at a time. After returning to the states and attending other conferences, he realized the classes needed to be smaller and opened up for discussion where members could openly express feelings with their peers.

"The goal is to find meaning and pride in what you did and reduce any feelings of bitterness, because bitterness can magnify trauma," Wohlraabe said. "We don't want to see our Seabees coming home with any sort of injury — physical, emotional or mental."

As the first female active duty regimental commander, Captain Katherine Gregory is turning the traditional 'Can Do' Seabee motto into 'Doing it.' Her infectious smile and consistent positive message resonate with her troops. Leading from the front and by example, she is...



## Proud to

The first wave of green camouflage uniforms files into the conference room and form an elongated circle around the table in the middle. The room is quickly filled in the back, and the wave becomes a sea. The last person into the room is also the shortest; at 5'3" she is also the most senior.

Captain Katherine Gregory, Commodore for the 30<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), may be small in stature, but she is big on ideas and serious on the topic of intrusive leadership. As she stands in front of her troops, she rubs her chin with one hand and pats the neckline of her short blonde hair with the other. The 14:00 weekly meeting, normally reserved for general military training, is taking a turn.

"Tell me what intrusive leadership means to you," Gregory said as she scanned the room.

The answers came swift and honest, and what was going to be Iraqi cultural awareness training in preparation for the regiment's upcoming deployment, was purposefully changed to gauge the leadership command climate. After listening to definitions from around the room, the

commodore hears a variety of opinions on the subject and smiles at what she hears.

"Listening to each idea, I can honestly say that you all bring valuable ideas to the table," Gregory said to everyone in the room. "We need to continue communicating with each other. It's important that we learn about the people we lead because you can't lead people whom you don't know."

It's a daily message, and it's not subtle.

### It's important that we learn about the people

It's team building and she's doing it with an 'in your face' lead by example program.

"Ooooh Raaah 30<sup>th</sup>! Let's have a good PT," she belts out just before a three-mile command run. Gregory, 46, leads the pack to keep her Seabees motivated.

"To see your commodore in the front motivating everyone, especially at her age, encourages all of us to put out our best effort," said Senior Chief Steelworker Manuel Manipon, 30<sup>th</sup> NCR Safety Officer. "After she finishes her run, she doubles

back and encourages everyone else to finish strong. Watching her put so much effort into each run reminds the rest of us that we can do it, too."

May 16, 2006 marked her first day as commodore for the 30<sup>th</sup> NCR, and was historically significant since she also became the first female active duty regimental commander. When asked if she is a role model for young women, she explained that role models may not always be gender-specific.

"In the military, the aspects that I look for in a role model are fairly gender neutral," said Gregory, who is in the final stages of mobilizing her regiment for a tour of duty in Iraq. "That said, most of the role models I have found in my life have honestly been men. I think I would have limited myself tremendously if I had looked only to women as role models.

"There are great leaders out there, both male and female, and we should consider everyone when choosing role models," Gregory continued. "My job





(Above, from left to right) ENS Katherine Gregory is promoted to LTJG by CAPT Eric R. Wilson, Commanding Officer, Public Works Center, Yokosuka, Japan, 1984; Joined by her parents Robert and Jean, Gregory is promoted to CDR by RADM Lou Smith, OPNAV N44, 1998; CAPT Gregory, 2006.  
U.S. Navy photos.

# Serve

By MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery, 30<sup>th</sup> NCR Public Affairs

every morning is to get up and do the best I can at everything, and if that resonates with some men or some women, well that's great."

Gregory, originally from St. Louis, Mo., was in high school when the military service academies opened to women for the first time.

"When I was thinking about what I wanted to do after graduating high school, joining the Navy seemed like a tremendous

all interesting and each job offers satisfying opportunities, but the Seabees are the most fun.

"Getting to come to work every day and working with young people who are fired up with doing the task at hand is incredibly exciting," she said. "It provides me with an energy I can't find in other parts of the Navy."

Gregory feels that the road ahead for the Naval Construction Force (NCF) is

in the future, and we'll do it with consistency, hard work and the strong principles that got us here in the first place," Gregory added.

Her passion for being a Seabee is second only to her pride and patriotism that comes from serving her country.

"We who serve are really lucky," Gregory said as she paused and gave the thought careful consideration. "Not a day goes by that I don't think about this. Young

**we lead because you can't lead people whom you don't know.**

adventure," said Gregory, a 1982 Naval Academy graduate. "I've been fortunate to be stationed in Japan, Italy and Spain, among other places."

When she decided to join the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) community, she knew she would be able to do a variety of jobs, but coming back to the Seabees and becoming a regimental commander was an easy choice.

"Whether it is contracting, public works or the Seabees, you can do so many things in the CEC," Gregory said. "They are

paved with the solid policies, procedures and systems that have guided her throughout her career.

"We can add a lot of value to the NCF by solidifying the old principles and doing the things we do well with integrity, quality and a sense of pride," she explained. "Our nation and our military are at a unique point right now. We are stretched in a lot of different directions, and we ask an awful lot of our people.

"The NCF is going to be successful

people who join the military, and those who have elected to stay, have a quality and integrity that inspires and instills a strong sense of pride in me.

"We have an opportunity to invest our time and effort into something we can be proud of for the rest of our lives," she said. "Not a lot of people in the world can say that, and I just feel so lucky to be a part of it."

*Note: The 30<sup>th</sup> NCR is currently deployed to Iraq.*

*(continued on next page)*

# Q & A with CAPT Gregory

(continued from previous page)

**Q: What is the one thing your Seabees don't know about you that they probably should?**

A: I am an avid St. Louis Cardinals fan, and I am a much happier person when they're winning!

**Q: What's the most important part of your job?**

A: I think the most important part is listening to what people say. It's tempting to get too involved in the operational part of our business. The NCF is full of people with tremendous experience, energy and desire to succeed. My staff and I focus on listening to their ideas, and we all succeed when we do that. We have a great variety of people with different backgrounds, education and experiences. We need to listen to

them and take advantage of those differences because there is strength in having a variety of unique options to choose from.

**Q: While having a discussion with one of your Sailors, he or she wants to know how to have a successful career like yours. What do you tell them?**

A: I tell people not to be afraid to pursue their goals and dreams. People are often reluctant to ask for opportunities because they think they'll be told no, or they are afraid to take a risk because there is a possibility of failure. The Navy wants to make people successful. We shouldn't be afraid to ask, try or stretch. Things work out well most of the time, but when they don't, they're the best learning experiences we have.

**Q: You are a role model to all of your Sailors, but what is your specific responsibility as a role model to young women trying to build successful careers?**

A: My responsibilities are the same to everyone, and we should all seek role models and mentors who demonstrate values and behaviors we admire. That said, if there are people who want the perspective of a woman, are more comfortable discussing issues and concerns to a woman or want to see how a woman might handle a situation or issue, then I'm eager to help.

**Q: What is the most important book on your bookshelf and why?**

A: There are too many great books for me to be able to identify the one most important! Recently I've enjoyed rereading *The Guns of August* by Tuchman about the first month of World War I.

**Q: Where do you see the Naval Construction Force in 20 years and how will what you are doing today pave the way for that future?**

A: The future is brighter for the NCF today than I've ever seen it. Seabee skills are in increasing demand in the Global War on Terror. One of the greatest demands of our work is as part of Theater Security Cooperation Plans (TSCP) and other initiatives such as the USNS Mercy mission and detachments to Indonesia and the Philippines. We are supported by our Navy leadership with state of the art equipment, gear and a solid force structure. The opportunities to do great work in interesting locations will only increase.

**Q: What is your favorite quote and why?**

A: Nietzsche said, "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." That statement reminds me that everything we do enables us to learn and improve...even (maybe usually) in the worst situations and during the worst experiences.

**Q: What role does your family play in your career and how do you successfully manage both?**

A: I'm single and don't have any children, so I don't face many of the challenges that couples and parents face. However, my parents, brothers and sisters and I are pretty close. Their support and encouragement have given me the confidence to accept jobs, take on challenges or move to various places.

**Q: Is there anything you would do differently in your career if you could do it over again?**

A: I would have spent more time thinking about priorities. When I was younger, I thought it would be easy to do everything and have everything — travel around the world, be assigned to all the exotic jobs, make multiple deployments, marry and have many children, be close and supportive for my parents and siblings, be involved in lots of sports and hobbies, have a very successful career, etc. In fact, most of these accomplishments take a lot of effort and time. If a person really wants to accomplish them all (or at least most of them), it's probably wise for a person to identify and focus on those which he or she feels are more important to him or her.

**Q: Do you have anything else you would like to share with Seabee Magazine readers?**

A: I think we have all had an experience where a civilian thanks us for serving our country. We, or at least I, should be thanking them for the opportunity to serve. Being in the Navy, and especially being in the Seabees, has enabled me to be involved in issues and operations that provide tangible and lasting benefits to our nation and world. It has also introduced me to countless talented and selfless people who make work a pleasure. I count myself very fortunate to have had these opportunities and relationships. We shouldn't take that for granted, and we should appreciate the opportunity to serve.





# Battalion Updates:

## SEABEES AROUND THE WORLD

### Seabees Complete Missile Battery Site in Okinawa

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 Seabees completed a major site improvement project at Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa, Japan, in November.

The site is now used for a missile battery by the 94<sup>th</sup> Army Air & Missile Defense Command, Air Defense Artillery Battalion.

"I've only had the opportunity to work with the 'Bees on two occasions," said Commanding General of 94<sup>th</sup> Army, Brig. Gen. John Seward, during a recent visit. "Each time, I have left astounded by the motivation and quality of their work. I only wish they were going to be here longer to build the rest," he said.

When asked for assistance on the project by Col. John Luce of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in early July, NMCB 1 coordinated with the 30<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) to realign

their priorities so they could tackle the missile battery site, which required extensive earth work using heavy construction equipment.

"It is great to be a part of something that is real," said Equipment Operator 1<sup>st</sup> Class James Brock, project supervisor. "At the beginning, I was a little concerned about being done by the deadline, but my 'Bees understand the importance of the job and worked hard all day, everyday, to make sure we finished early, not just on time."

NMCB 1 constructed two separate areas that work together to become one battery site. For the Seabees involved, the

project not only provided them with the satisfaction of knowing they are doing their part to help fight the Global War on Terror, but it also provided hands-on train-

*By MC3 Ja'lon Rhinehart, NMCB 1*

# Seabees in Okinawa Japan

NMCB 1

ing for the troops.

"I have a lot of junior guys out here who are getting some awesome experience with the equipment," said Brock. "We are not only helping the Army, but we are also helping ourselves by supplying essential training time for some of the younger 'Bees."

**Project Supervisor EO1 James Brock (left), NMCB 1, provides a site tour to Commanding General, 94<sup>th</sup> Army Air & Missile Defense Command, Brig. Gen. John Seward (center). NMCB 1 constructed a site in Okinawa for a Patriot Missile Battery for the U.S. Army.**

**Photo by MC3 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart, NMCB 1**



# Seabees in Djibouti Horn of Africa >

(Right) While visiting the NMCB 5 Tadjoura Primary School Project, Commander, NAVFAC, Atlantic, RADM Richard Cellon frocked three Seabees to their next paygrade. Cellon visited service members from Camp Lemonier and Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA).

Photo by MCC Eric A. Clement

## Seabees Provide Relief to Kenyan Flood Victims

A team of Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 assigned to Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) was diverted from its mission of drilling wells late last year to provide emergency relief to areas of Kenya devastated by torrential rains and subsequent massive flooding in the region.

“The mission in Kenya was originally to have the Seabees drill several wells in the eastern region of Garissa,” explained Commander Glenn Tootle, a reserve Civil Engineer Corps Officer and Navy liaison to CJTF-HOA. “We were deployed here to work with the Kenyan government in an effort to provide solutions for the country’s long-term drought problems, but the Seabees and their ‘Can Do,’ shift-on-the-fly ability made the disaster relief mission an easy fit.”

Well-drilling operations were abruptly interrupted in October when a series of uncharacteristic storms hit the region, washing out roads and isolating remote villages from normal supply lines, transit routes and resources. The rains continued through November, and the Kenyan government, in cooperation with the International Red Cross and the World

Food Program, looked to U.S. military resources in the region to provide assistance and relief.

On November 30, NMCB 5 Seabees began preparing for a food delivery mission using Seabee tactical vehicles.

“We loaded rice and non-perishable food items onto our trucks from sunrise to sunset,” recalled Equipment Operator 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (SCW) Matthew Bobinchak. “It

# Kenya Horn of Africa



was amazing to see the resources provided by the United States and other supporting countries. We were excited to be part of the recovery mission and knew that we could help.”

Seabee tactical vehicles left Garissa and traveled to numerous locations identified as having critical need for food, water and supplies. The Seabee team, accompanied by a Kenyan Red Cross representative was met by countless grateful Kenyan nationals who had been cut off from normal food supplies for nearly two months.

“The looks on the faces of the citizens

was something that I will never forget,” remarked Steel Worker 3<sup>rd</sup> Class (SCW) Rachel Stewart. “I will never again take for granted all that we have in the United States. My deployment here has been humbling and gratifying.”

Following the food delivery mission, NMCB 5 Seabees resumed well-drilling operations near Garissa. Completion of well projects will provide a reliable source of potable water to the region for years to come. Ultimately, water availability to this impoverished area of the world will allow citizens to live with greater confidence in their health and the welfare of future generations.

“We hope that our work here, even though the conditions are less than optimal, will leave lasting positive results,” stated Chief Petty Officer in Charge of the Kenyan Seabee detachment, Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) Tom Maxwell. “These troops have certainly had the experience of a lifetime, and I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve with them here. They represent the best of the United States, and the best of the Navy. I’m glad that the people of Kenya had a chance to get to know us, and vice versa.”





## NMCB 1 Detachment Drills Wells in Pohnpei

By MC2 Chad Runge, NMCB 1

For the past six months, Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 worked hand-in-hand with the local government of Pohnpei, Micronesia, to expand the small island's ability to develop reliable, high-producing water wells.

Although the island receives an average of more than 340 inches of rain each year, the water sources do not offer consistently clean drinking water. The island population was recently ravaged by cholera and other life-threatening diseases from natural pollutants in the shallow surface waters.

"In the past, deaths have resulted on this island due to inadequate water availability and water cleanliness," said Senior Chief Equipment Operator Roger Wiley, the detachment's officer-in-charge. "This operation will ensure something like that will never happen again."

After completing six of the new water wells, the 'Bees' efforts were amplified by the local team of workers from the Pohnpei Utilities Commission (PUC), who

becoming more knowledgeable each day. I have had a great experience teaching and also learning from them."

The bonds between the local community and the Seabees have grown stronger, as the groups often participate in activities together during their off-duty hours. The detachment also regularly hosts movie nights in the local villages to build on their new friendships. Even as they work, the 'Bees can't help but return hand salutes from the local children.

"Everywhere I go, the local people have been extremely friendly and respectful to me and my fellow Seabees," said Utilitiesman Constructionman Travis Plumb. "I have felt very welcome in Pohnpei, which has made my time here much easier and a lot more enjoyable. I will truly miss this place and the people I have met when I leave here."

# Pohnpei

Micronesia

NMCB 1

will be responsible for the maintenance of these wells, and the creation of additional wells in the future.

"The locals are very helpful, and are willing to learn what we have to teach," said Equipment Operator Constructionman Robert Weissenfluh. "They have changed very much since we have been working hand-in-hand. They have learned to be safer and how to properly drill efficiently. They are very helpful and are

# TRAINING

# OPERATION MEATHOOK

NMCB 4

## Seabees Demonstrate Mount-Out Capabilities

*By MCC (SW/AW) Steve Bansbach, NMCB 4*

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 completed a 48-hour simulated Mount-Out exercise —Operation Meathook — in late October in Port Hueneme, Calif. Operation Meathook, an embarkation/command and control exercise, tests the readiness capabilities of the battalion to deploy equipment and personnel in response to any real-world crisis.

During this exercise NMCB 4 personnel establish a Mount-Out Control Center (MOCC), an embark yard and an alpha yard for staging material and equipment. Leading up to this exercise, NMCB 4 held an internal exercise to ready themselves, ensuring personnel knew their roles and tasks prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> Seabee Readiness Group's (SRG's) warning order.

Working in conjunction with the Operations Department and Air Det Alpha, the Embarkation Officer, Chief Warrant Officer Glenn Richardson, started planning with the understanding that this type of situation could happen at any time.

"Because of Iraq this is no longer a routine exercise. This is real world stuff that can happen every time we deploy,"

Richardson said. "It requires a high degree of skill. You have to plan everything from aircraft to equipment and personnel.

"This exercise provides the motivation not only to do the job, but do it correctly," he added.

Engineering Aide Constructionman Drew Huskey, with the battalion for less than a year, was able to see firsthand what it took to complete the mission.

"I learned a lot about the embarkation process and how important it is to this exercise," Huskey said. "It takes communication and organization for everyone to be on the same page and get everything done."

While this exercise covers a broad spectrum of requirements, the exercise's main component is the embarkation process.

"During this exercise the newest Seabee will learn why we put the 'M' in NMCB," Senior Chief Utilitiesman (SCW) Mike Diianni said. "Embarkation is the main part of this evolution."



(Above) Members of NMCB 4 palletize field gear demonstrating embark readiness of the battalion. (Left) NMCB 4 BU2 (SCW) Dave Shaw directs BU1 (SCW) Elton Oliphant during the upload of Tricon containers during Operation Meathook.

Photos by MC2 (AW/SW) Ronald Gutridge





# NECC at CHINA LAKE

## Reserve Seabees Build NECC Training Range

By LTJG Mary Leovich, NMCB 17, and  
UT2 Ken Irwin, NCFSU 2

For six months this past spring and summer, Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 17, Naval Construction Force Support Unit (NCFSU) 2, Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1, along with NMCBs 15 and 18, worked in the high desert environment of China Lake Naval Weapons Station (NWS), Calif., to build the premiere training facility for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) community and its parent command, the newly established Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). The initial training course at NECC's Combat Mobility and Small Unit Tactics Training Range was held in October.

NECC's new facility required eight kilometers of tactical convoy road, 5,900 square feet of heavy timber facades and 135,000 cubic yards of protective berm. Upon completion, NECC had new pistol, rifle and machine gun static ranges, along with mobile, live-fire tactical convoy ranges and simulated building facades for ground troops to practice engaging the enemy across roads and through structures.

This was no small undertaking as all food, fuel, water, camp consumables and repair parts had to be brought to the site via an hour-long trip on unimproved roads.

Additionally, the job site was so remote and the typical work day so long, that a forward operating base had to be established.

Tasked to complete the project following the initial site work conducted by NCFSU 2, NMCB 17 took the lead in overall project management. The project's labor requirement, however, soon consumed the available labor and NMCB 17's Operations Department quickly coordinated with other Seabee units to help provide the necessary manpower.

"This project provided an excellent training opportunity due to the remote location, environment and the type of work performed," said Project Officer-in-Charge LT John Caufield, NMCB 17. "The horizontal and vertical work exercised skill sets that have generally been dormant in our Reserve Seabees, including heavy equipment operation and timber construction nine hours a day, six days a week.

"This allowed more senior Seabees not only to revive their skills, but to train the junior personnel," Caufield continued.

The Reserve Naval Construction Force now has an additional 193 Seabees who are familiar with operations and logistics in a remote location, heavy equipment operation and rough construction.

The Assistant Leading Petty Officer for the project, Equipment Operator 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Walter Gibbs, was one of five Seabees working full time on the range. Among his many duties as project manager, Gibbs coordinated the transfer and training of all Seabees fulfilling their two weeks of annual training.

"It's as close as it gets to actually being deployed in the desert," Gibbs said. "Whether they came from NCFSU 2, ACB 1, NMCB 15, 17 or 18, everyone worked as a team. The way they worked together, you would have thought everyone was from the same unit."

**BUCN Vince Pace, NMCB 18, cuts timber for a shooting façade project at China Lake Naval Weapons Station, Calif. The shooting façade resembles the front of a building, including windows, where Sailors practice engaging the enemy with small arms fire.**

Photo by LTJG Mary Leovich, NMCB 17



NMCB 4

## SUPER SQUAD

### Super Squad Leads to “Super” Training

By MCC (SW/AW), Steve Bansbach, NMCB 4



**Members of NMCB 4 demonstrate the fireman rescue carry during the Super Squad competition.**

Photo by MC2 (AW/SW)  
Ronald Gutridge

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 Seabees displayed their expertise and pride during the Seabee Olympics at Port Hueneme in late November.

The First Class Petty Officer Association organized the 12-station event concentrating on basic Seabee fundamentals and knowledge-based tasks. Ten squads participated in the all-day event.

NMCB 4 holds the Super Squad event each year to emphasize the skills and knowledge Seabees learn during Unit Driven Training (UDT). UDT serves as a building block leading up to the command's Field

Exercise (FEX) which began after Thanksgiving. The First Class Petty Officer Association developed the squad-centered event in

which everyone could participate in order to strengthen the “one team” concept.

Teams were comprised of 10- to 14-person squads with each event designed to test the unit as a team.

“No event was individualized,” Builder 1<sup>st</sup> Class (SCW) John Rearich said. “It’s not the fastest, strongest or smartest team that wins; it has to be a collective effort.”

Some of the other events included weapons assembly and disassembly, antennae setup, HMMWV push/pull, and rucksack memory quiz. The most physically draining competition was the Stretcher/Buddy Aid Race.

“It was good to be out there,” Construction Electrician 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Glen Murphy said. “A classroom can be very dull, but out there in a group we all were like a brotherhood and everyone saw eye to eye.”

Chiefs and officers were not only impartial judges, but they also acted as motivational support for the participants. In the end, Air Det Alpha, Second Squad took home the title beating the Convoy Security Team by seven points.

“This was a big event,” said CDR Steven Hamer, NMCB 4’s commander officer. “I wanted to have a little bit of fun at the end of UDT training, but still maintain our battle skill readiness.”

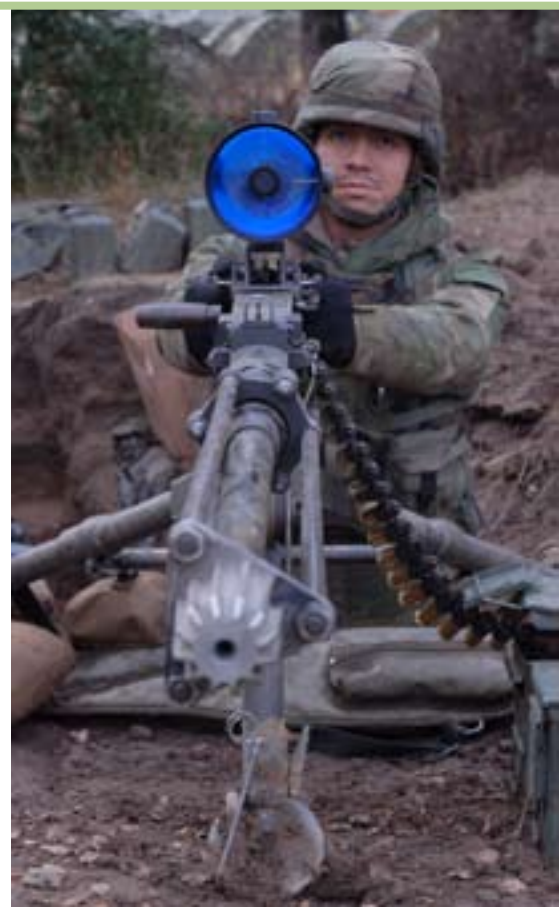


# FEX

### FEX Operation Bearing Duel Tests Seabee Mettle

Seabees from NMCB 4 sharpened their warfare skills during Field Exercise (FEX) Operation Bearing Duel at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in late 2006. (Left) EO1 (SCW) Simon Wyant (near left) and SW3 Jessica Stager prepare to clear a building of unknown threats. (Right) CM2 Albert Guerrero mans the M2 .50-caliber machine gun. NMCB 4 is homeported at Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif.

Photos by MC2 Ronald Gutridge







# A Special Homecoming

**Jeanette Blackmon (right), her son Jeremy and sister Hazel Hyers watch volunteers raise the first wall of the new Blackmon home. A local builder donated materials and equipment while labor came in the form of high school students, Sailors and neighbors.**

*Photo by Ed Buczek, Public Affairs Officer, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga*

## Community Delivers Keys to Blackmon family

*By MC2 (SW) Michael Wiss, Kings Bay Periscope Staff*

**L**ike all Americans, Steelworker 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Jeffery Blackmon had a modest dream: Make a better life for his family and build a dream home in the country.

However the dream was put on hold when life took a tragic turn on May 2, 2004, following a mortar attack that left five fellow Seabees from the Jacksonville-based Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 14 reserve unit dead and Blackmon a quadriplegic. A couple of days earlier, two Seabees from the same unit were killed in another attack making it the single greatest loss of life suffered by a construction battalion in Iraq. Blackmon's vision of a normal life and a new home was gone. Or so it seemed.

Rather than see a dream wither and die so quickly, hundreds of volunteers from Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga., and the Camden County community rallied their support to build that dream home. Three months after the first nail was pounded, they handed over the keys of a new

3,100 sq. ft. home to the Blackmon family. During a dedication ceremony on June 17, 2006, in Browntown, an unincorporated community located a few miles west of the Trident submarine base in coastal Georgia, Jeff Blackmon's dream had come true.

new home by Kings Bay Sailors and escorted by his family and Navy veterans.

The four-bedroom home is fully wheelchair-accessible, making it easier for Blackmon to maneuver from room-to-room. According to his wife, Jeanette, the new home is more than she ever dreamed of.

"It is overwhelming the amount of time and effort all the volunteers from Camden County provided," she said. "I cannot even begin to thank everyone who pitched in to make this happen. This community is great, the way they show their support to make Jeff's life a little better."

The home project began with a simple gesture from a neighbor. High school student

Brandon Minter asked what he could do to help out. Jeanette asked for something small and practical.

"I asked for a bench and got a house," she said.



**With Side-Boys saluting, and Veterans, Sailors, Marines, friends and family surrounding him, SW3 Jeffery Blackmon is piped aboard to his new home in late August.**

*Photo by MC2 Class William Tonacchio*

After two years in VA hospitals and being restricted to the living and dining rooms in his current home, the injured Seabee was treated to a welcoming normally reserved for distinguished visitors. In his dress white uniform, Blackmon was piped aboard his

*(continued on next page)*



(continued from previous page)

"I just wanted to do anything I could," Minter said. "He made the sacrifice for us. I wanted to show my support."

Minter approached teacher and head advisor for SkillsUSA, Carlos Jones Jr., about the project for the Blackmon family. Jones went a step further and made a blueprint to improve mobility in the original home. He concluded that to make the house truly wheelchair accessible, a larger home was needed. When word got out about the family needs Jones related, the community came together in a show of unparalleled support for Blackmon.

"I am very fortunate to live in Camden County [where people show] outstanding support for each other," Jones stated. "Parents have raised such great kids and their hearts are big enough that when somebody is less fortunate, they were able to step in and accomplish what some people believe was an impossible task.

"Jeffery has paid enough," Jones added. "We wanted to provide what he wanted for his family before he went to war — a comfortable home his family can be proud of."

The Camden County community — Sailors, Marines, veterans, neighbors and strangers — bonded together to make the home project a reality.

"The volunteer support for [Petty Officer] Blackmon was reflective of the tremendous spirit and support the community has for the military serving their nation," said CAPT Mike McKinnon, commanding officer of Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. He said Blackmon was willing to sacrifice everything for his country.

However, McKinnon stated, the Blackmon family is also a role model for the community.

"Jeanette Blackmon is a perfect example of who a military spouse is," he said. "She sacrificed day-in, day-out separation with the potential that this could happen. She handled everything in a positive and professional manner. She is the role model for all military spouses."



## Seabee Receives SAME Recognition Award

*Submitted by NAVFAC Headquarters Public Affairs & Communications*

Builder 1<sup>st</sup> Class (SCW/FMF) Paul Verratti, Naval Support Unit (NSU), Department of State, received a Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Military Recognition Award from the SAME District of Columbia Post in December.



Verratti was chosen for this recognition for his superior performance, exceptional military bearing and outstanding support during an Iraq deployment. Although new to the unit, he stood out as one of the top representatives for NSU and the Navy Seabee community.

**(Above) BU1 Paul Verratti (left), NSU, DoS, receives a Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Military Recognition Award from Tony Maida, President of the SAME District of Columbia Post.**

*Photo by LT Patrick Conner, NSU, DoS*

## NMCB 4 Recognized for Outstanding Fitness Program

*By MC2 (AW/SW)  
Ron Gutridge, NMCB 4*

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 recently won the Physical Readiness Excellence Award for the Spring 2006 Physical Fitness Assessment.

To qualify for the award, at least 95 percent of the unit's onboard strength must participate in the Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) cycle. In this particular cycle, a large percentage of NMCB 4's entire unit scored in the 'Excellent' range or above on the last assessment which brought the award home to Port Hueneme.

Even with the award in hand, NMCB 4 constantly strives to improve physical readiness by conducting PT three times a week, incorporating sports days and timed runs.

"The focus of the battalion is to create a culture of fitness to ensure the troops understand the importance of physical readiness," said Builder Chief James White, physical training coordinator, NMCB 4. "It's not just a PT score."

NMCB 4 also conducts a strict ongoing Fitness Enhancement Program for those who require extra help and encouragement to maintain the required fitness level.

**(Above) BU3 Kevin Devine, NMCB 4, proudly displays the Physical Readiness Excellence Award streamer.**

*Photo by MC2 (AW/SW) Ronald Gutridge*





### SEABEES RESCUE TOKYO MAN

By MC1 Carmichael Yopez, NMCB 3

Two Seabees on deployment with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 Detail Yokosuka became local heroes when they rescued a man who fell onto the tracks in a local subway station in the Roppongi District of Tokyo, Japan, in late December.

The rescue was not part of the sightseeing tour Construction Electrician 1<sup>st</sup> Class Paul Ramirez and Equipment Operator 1<sup>st</sup> Class Christopher Brown were expecting that day.

Ramirez and Brown were waiting to board a train back to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka when a man who appeared to be sleeping on a bench suddenly stood up, staggered to the edge of the subway station platform, and fell head first onto the sub-

way tracks.

"I believe everyone was in shock after seeing what just happened because nobody reacted to do anything," said Brown. "We immediately ran over to the edge of the platform, and the man was lying on the ground unconscious and bleeding from his head.

"Then, I remember hearing the train, so I believe our combat life saver training must have kicked in because the next thing I knew we were jumping down onto the tracks five feet below the platform edge and pulling the man to safety," Brown added.

According to Brown, once he and Ramirez pulled the man off the tracks and placed him safely on the platform, they quickly asked the train station security guard to get a first aid kit

and immediately began applying bandages to suppress the bleeding.

"Although we couldn't communicate with the man directly, we were able to communicate through a Japanese lady who was also waiting for the train. She translated for us while we treated his wounds," said Ramirez.

The two Seabees continued to render assistance until the local ambulance arrived.

"We are all humans, and Seabees are known to be compassionate people," Ramirez said. "If we wouldn't have pulled him out, the train would have run him over."

Ramirez and Brown credit their rescue efforts to the extensive training they have received in the Navy as Seabees.

"Our reaction was

basic instinct," said Ramirez, who has been in the Navy for 10 years. "We've been in two battalions, so the combat life saver training and all the stuff you learn in the battalion came in handy."

After the paramedics transported the man, many onlookers bowed in thanks to the two Seabees for helping the man. Later that day, Ramirez and Brown returned to Yokosuka with a feeling of accomplishment and the knowledge that their simple excursion had turned into a rescue mission demonstrating the "Can Do" spirit of the Seabees.

"We were just glad the paramedics arrived," said Ramirez. "It feels great knowing we saved someone's life."

**NMCB 3 Seabees CE1 Paul Ramirez (left) and EO1 Christopher Brown worked in tandem to rescue a man who fell onto the tracks in a subway station in Tokyo, Japan, on December 20. Both Seabees attributed the successful rescue and first aid effort to the skills they received through combat life saver training.**

Photo by LT William Wohead, NMCB 3



### SAILORS RESCUE RESIDENTS FROM APARTMENT BLAZE

*By MCSN David Brandenburg, Fleet Public Affairs Center, Pacific*

Two Sailors from Beach Master Unit (BMU) 1 rescued four civilians and one canine from a burning apartment complex in early December.

Construction Mechanic 1<sup>st</sup> Class (SW/AW/SCW) Timothy Milan and Constructionman Apprentice Troy Spong saw billowing smoke and flames coming from the roof of the civilian apartment complex while they traveled from Naval Air Station North Island to Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, Calif.

The two Sailors

approached the building and then began evacuating civilian personnel, while local fire and police were notified by a nearby resident.

"The adrenaline was pumping so much I didn't have time to hesitate," Milan said, "I just began searching different rooms and trying to get everyone out that I could."

Both Milan and Spong credited their Navy damage control training, and expressed how valuable those skills were for this type of situation.

"Having a background in firefighting and knowing the procedures when we have fire drills was a huge help," Spong said. "All the knowledge kicked in, and I did what I had to do to get people out."

The Coronado Fire Department arrived shortly after Milan and Spong had begun evacuating people from the building.

"Anytime members of the community help mitigate a situation in a safe manner like these two service members

did, it is greatly appreciated," said Coronado Fire Division Chief Alan Nowakowski.

No one was injured in the fire. Coronado Fire Department investigators believed it was caused by a torching process used earlier that day while installing a new roof on the building. They added the fire caused minimal damage to the building.

"It makes me feel good in my heart to know that I could help those people," Milan said.

### SEABEES HELP RESCUE A KENYAN MAN STRANDED BY FLOOD WATERS

*By MCC (DV) Chief Robert Palomares, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa*

November 18 started out routinely for Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) Thomas Maxwell, officer in charge of the well drilling team, and his NMCB 5 Seabee crew in a remote area of Kenya. After establishing a reliable water source for the village of Raya, they traveled to Garissa, another area affected by recent flooding and the location of the Kenya Department of Defense (KDoD) camp.

When the Seabees arrived at the camp, the commanding officer of the KDoD battalion explained that the floodgates on several hydro-electric dams had to be opened the previous night to prevent the dams from overflowing. However, opening the gates had caused widespread flooding and many

towns and villages were completely cut off from land.

Returning to Raya, Maxwell received a call from the Kenyan commanding officer requesting that

had stayed back to rescue livestock and he was now stranded. When they arrived at the edge of the floodwater, they could hear him calling for help.

They moved two trucks

At that point, two local residents swam to the stranded man and carried him back to the trucks. He was badly dehydrated and extremely exhausted. Hospital Corpsman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Brian M. Strahl administered first aid, and then escorted him to Garissa Hospital for further treatment.

"My team should be commended for their professionalism and for going above and beyond," Maxwell said. "They stopped at nothing to help save whomever they could. They are the shining example of everything an American should be in the Horn of Africa. Their efforts should not be forgotten."

NMCB 5 is homeported at Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif.

*"My team [is] the shining example of everything an American should be in the Horn of Africa."*

*EOC (SCW) Thomas Maxwell, NMCB 5*

his team rescue some flood victims near the village.

Seabees proceeded to the affected area with six KDoD soldiers and two Raya village elders. The soldiers learned that one person from the tribe

into the flooded area where the water was lapping at the bottom portion of the cab door. If the water had been a foot higher, the truck would not have been able to make it, Maxwell said.



## SEABEES PARTICIPATE IN NASCAR FLEET HONOREE PROGRAM

By LCDR David Oravec, LTJG Craig Booth and BUCN John Mays, NMCB 23

"Racing is a lot like life — you have your highs and lows, but as long as you persevere it's going to be alright."

These words were spoken by Senior Chief Builder Robert Westover who was among a group of six Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 23 selected to represent their command by the NASCAR Fleet Honoree Program at the November Bush Series O'Reilly Challenge at the Texas Motor Speedway in Justin, Texas. NMCB 23 is a reserve battalion headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Westover, who was injured in Iraq in 2004, knows a lot about perseverance. Since sustaining his injuries, he has undergone more than a dozen surger-

ies at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. Nevertheless, he was excited to see the race and meet Shane Huffman, driver of the Navy's *Accelerate Your Life* No. 88 Chevrolet Monte Carlo.

Huffman thanked Westover for his service and also greeted the other NMCB 23 Seabees: LCDR David Oravec, Equipment Operator 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Brian Hedrick, Utilitiesman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Kenneth Jacques, Construction Mechanic 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Maurice Warner, and Equipment Operator 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Michael White.

Official Guest RADM Jeffery Brooks, Director, Fleet Maintenance Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, agreed the partnership with the Navy and the

No. 88 car was an excellent opportunity stating, "It's a great thing for the Navy to be a part of all the fun and excitement."

The Sailors from NMCB 23 received VIP treatment from Huffman and the Texas Motor Speedway. During pre-race events, Seabees toured the infield and had pictures taken with the car, driver and pit crew. In addition, they joined members of the Navy Recruiting Command to answer questions and talk about their experiences with the Seabees and the Navy.

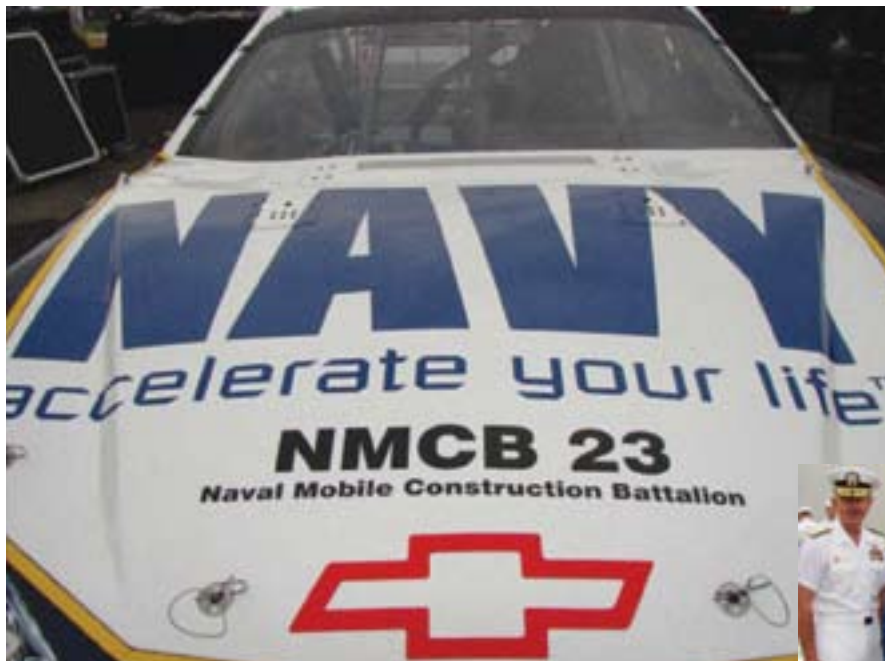
The event was a real treat even though No. 88 failed to finish the race. In lap 64, the car was running in 19<sup>th</sup> position when a tire blew out in the middle of turns 3 and 4, sending Huffman into the wall. Although he was

uninjured, his car was out of action for the day, leading to a disappointing 42<sup>nd</sup>-place finish.

Referring to the early wreck, Huffman said, "The No. 88 Navy Chevy was awesome today...I hate it most for the guys on the team. We had a good run in Memphis and it looked like today was going to be a good day for us as well, but I guess it wasn't meant to be."

The members of NMCB 23 certainly understood Shane's sentiment. Meeting challenges and depending on a team for success is what Seabees understand the most.

"There's nothing Seabees like better than a challenge," Westover said. "If it's difficult we like it. If it's impossible, we love it!"



Seabees from NMCB 23 were treated as VIPs at the Bush Series O'Reilly Challenge at the Texas Motor Speedway in Justin, Texas. (Left) Hood shot of No. 88 Navy *Accelerate Your Life* Chevrolet Monte Carlo race car features the NMCB 23 name. (Below) NMCB 23 Seabees and RADM Jeffery Brooks (far left) are pictured with Shane Huffman (second from left), driver of the Navy's No. 88, at the Texas Motor Speedway.

Photos by EO3 Michael White



## NAVFAC & SEABEES HIGHLIGHTED IN NEW COMMAND VIDEO

By NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs & Communications



"Welcome to the Naval Facilities Engineering Command! You are now an important part of a dynamic organization. An organization built on a rich tradition blended with diverse backgrounds, talents and skills...supporting Navy and Marine Corps Warfighters, the Fleet and their families."

These are the opening lines from NAVFAC's new Employee Orientation which is part of a comprehensive web resource targeted at all incoming NAVFAC employees, including civil service, military and contractor personnel.

"The Navy's Facilities Engineering Professionals – Employee Orientation Video" features NAVFAC's mission, history, global presence and culture. Spanning the past 165 years, highlights include NAVFAC's support of the Global War on Terror and response to natural disasters, the roots of the modern Civil Engineer Corps, mission and history of the Seabees, NAVFAC's worldwide organization structure, and priorities such as safety and process improvement.

All NAVFAC personnel, Civil Engineer Corps officers, and Seabees are encouraged to view the video at <https://portal.navfac.navy.mil/go/newemployees>.

Reunions bring together Seabees from all eras and provide great photos for *Seabee Magazine*. Send your favorite digital shots to [seebemagazine@navy.mil](mailto:seebemagazine@navy.mil). (Photo resolution: 300 dpi at 5x7 inches minimum)

## 2007 SEABEE REUNIONS

### APRIL

**24<sup>th</sup> NCB/NMCB 24**  
April 18-21  
Nashville, TN  
David B. Smith  
884 Old Alabama Rd., S.W.  
McDonald, TN 37353  
423-479-7893  
[dbsmith@aol.com](mailto:dbsmith@aol.com)

**NMCB 40/40<sup>th</sup> NCB (All Eras)**  
April 19-22  
Atlanta, GA  
Edward Holston  
P.O. Box 112  
Franklinville, NJ 08322  
856-740-0078  
[nmseabee40@mycelery.com](mailto:nmseabee40@mycelery.com)

### MAY

**MCB 4 (Vietnam)**  
May 7-10  
Branson, MO  
Nick Marschhauser  
478 Fortsville Rd.  
Gansevoort, NY 12831  
518-745-7753  
[nick@nickstents.com](mailto:nick@nickstents.com)

**NMCB 12 (Vietnam)**  
May 20-23  
Saratoga Springs, NY  
Bob Williams  
P.O. Box 48  
Ludlow, VT 05149  
802-228-8672  
[Mcb12nam@tds.net](mailto:Mcb12nam@tds.net)

### JUNE ►

**ALL SEABEE REUNION**  
June 21-24, 2007  
Port Hueneme, CA  
Ed Kloster  
3815 Rio Hondo Ave.  
Rosemead, CA 91770  
626-280-9495  
[mccb@earthlink.net](mailto:mccb@earthlink.net)

**RETIRED SEABEE REUNION**  
June 23, 2007  
Gulfport, Miss.  
EQCM Glen Kellerman  
P.O. Box 998  
Long Beach, MS 39560  
228-255-9687  
[eqpackrat@aol.com](mailto:eqpackrat@aol.com)

### JULY

**NMCB 1 (Mini Reunion)**  
July 4  
Hemlock, NY  
Peter Dowd  
89 Edward Rd.  
Marshfield, MA 02050  
781-837-0393  
[Mcb1reunion@verizon.net](mailto:Mcb1reunion@verizon.net)

**NMCB 6**  
July 20-24  
Washington, DC  
John Bevier  
5200 W. Sanborn Rd.  
Lake City, MI 49651  
231-633-9450 (cell)  
[jbevier@michweb.net](mailto:jbevier@michweb.net)

### Seabee Days

*(held during the All Seabee Reunion on June 23-24)*  
*is a tradition of the United States Navy Construction Battalion Center, Port Hueneme, California.*  
*This annual event began in 1986 as a way of involving the community at large in the activities of the Seabees. This "open house" gives our neighbors a chance to come aboard the base for a variety of displays and entertainment.*  
*Over the years, Seabee Days has evolved into a two-day event, which attracts thousands of visitors each year.*

### OCTOBER

**NMCB 1 (All Eras)**  
Oct. 5-7  
Nashville, TN  
Peter Dowd  
89 Edward Rd.  
Marshfield, MA 02050  
781-837-0393  
[Mcb1reunion@verizon.net](mailto:Mcb1reunion@verizon.net)

**NMCB 2 (Korea)**  
Oct. 20-23  
St. Louis, MO  
Scott Williams  
725 Summer Ridge Dr.  
Villa Rica, GA 30180  
770-456-4246  
[williash@aol.com](mailto:williash@aol.com)

**ALL SEABEE REUNION**  
October 2007 (dates tba)  
Gulfport/Biloxi, MS  
EQCM Glen Kellerman  
P.O. Box 998  
Long Beach, MS 39560  
228-255-9687  
[eqpackrat@aol.com](mailto:eqpackrat@aol.com)

*For complete list of reunions, visit [www.allseabees.com](http://www.allseabees.com) or the Seabee Historical Foundation at [www.seabeehf.org](http://www.seabeehf.org).*





As you know, this year marks an important milestone in our history. Sixty-five years ago, the call went out across the nation to recruit the first Navy Seabees. On the heels of the Great Depression, America was now at war, and thousands signed up to join this new group of builder-fighters. They came from the heart of American industry — steelworkers, bricklayers and carpenters who had built our nation's greatest skyscrapers, bridges, tunnels and dams. With an emphasis on experience and skill, they were quickly trained and shipped overseas to build massive bases, airfields and supply depots necessary to the success of the war effort. About 325,000 Seabees would eventually serve in World War II. They were hard-working men who knew they could build anything if they put their minds and muscles into it.

And build, they did.

During World War II, Seabees constructed 111 major airstrips, 700 square blocks of warehouses, hospitals for 70,000 patients, storage tanks for 100 million gallons of gasoline and housing for 1.5 million men. In nearly every major invasion in the Pacific, Marines were followed by Seabees to support the invasion and provide long-term facilities for the troops. Due to their unparalleled success, Seabees became a permanent part of the U.S. Navy and continued to build a reputation for getting the job done and making miracles happen.

This is our heritage. Forged in the struggle of a global war against a ruthless enemy and honed during the six decades that followed, the Seabees remain a force to be reckoned with to this day, and you continue to make the world a better place.

Your efforts this past year have reinforced our reputation as the contingency construction force of choice and written new chapters in the Seabee legacy.

Demonstrating your compassion for others, Seabees helped flood victims in Ethiopia, drilled water wells in Pohnpei, and built schools and medical clinics in Peru. A small group of Seabees aboard USNS Mercy made a big difference by building and repairing infrastructure and medical facilities from East Timor and Indonesia to Bangladesh and the Philippines during the ship's 72-day voyage.

Seabees also built a school dormitory in Djibouti and drilled water wells in Kenya. These efforts have thwarted terrorist influences in this part of the world by showing America's willingness and ability to help our friends by improving their lives in the most basic of ways.

As a major participant in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, Seabees completed a 2,600-square foot warehouse in Kuwait, repaired a runway at Al Asad, and improved force protection and made other improvements at Ar Ramadi and Al Taqaddum. Other projects included an 18,000-square foot medical facility and a 400-foot water well. Seabees built and repaired camps for the Iraqi Security Forces, and repaired roads and bridges throughout the Al Anbar Province. Seabees also completed airstrip improvements in Afghanistan and constructed facilities for the Army's 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. These efforts have improved the quality of life for your fellow service members and helped provide stability in this critical region.

These are just a few of your many recent accomplishments. Your work has indeed made the world a better place, and that is one of the greatest achievements anyone could attain.

But making the world a better place begins with one's personal life. Being a good spouse, a good parent, a good citizen and a good friend help makes your world a better place. In wearing the uniform of the U.S. Navy, you will always represent the best our nation has to offer. As a member of the U.S. Navy Seabees, you are entrusted to reflect the pride and professionalism that has earned us the outstanding reputation we enjoy today. Just as we take care of our friends and allies in other parts of the world, we must take care of each other as well.

On this 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Navy Seabees, I would like to express my deep appreciation for all that you continue to do. You have carried on the "Can Do" tradition of our predecessors and made the world a better place in many ways. Through your hard work, dedication, skill and compassion, you have shown the world that after 65 years, Seabees still make miracles happen.

U.S. Navy photo



## *Construimus Batuimus.*

# Seabee History On Display at Pentagon

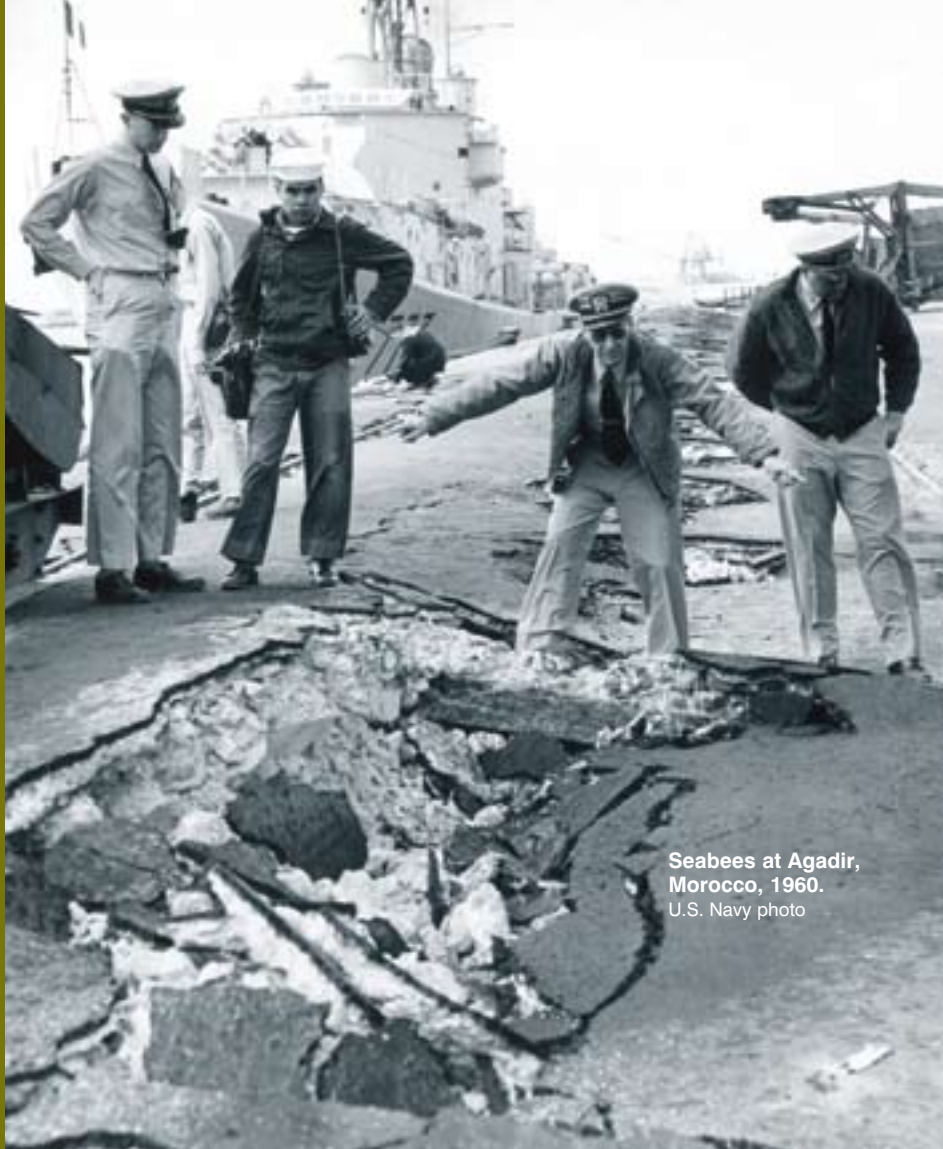
*By NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs & Communications*

**T**housands of visitors to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., will now have an opportunity to visually relive the history and contributions of Seabees through a new exhibit.

The collection of historical vignettes, photographs and artifacts is enclosed in four glass cases located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor across from the Navy's Chief of Information (4B463). Through the permanent exhibit, visitors will learn about the formation of the Seabees by Admiral Ben Moreell in March 1942, as well as their heroic construction work and 'roads to victory' in World War II. The exhibit continues with Seabee participation in every major U.S. wartime effort, including Korea, Vietnam, Southeast Asia, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Finally, the exhibit highlights Seabees' contingency and humanitarian efforts worldwide with their most recent disaster response role on the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Coordinated by NAVFAC Headquarters and the Seabee Museum, the exhibit is still in need of additional artifacts and photographs. Those interested in loaning items may call the NAVFAC Public Affairs & Communications Office at (202) 685-9126 or email Ginny Bueno, Public Affairs & Communications Director, at [virginia.bueno@navy.mil](mailto:virginia.bueno@navy.mil).



**Seabees at Agadir,  
Morocco, 1960.**  
U.S. Navy photo



## **NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND**

**SEABEE MAGAZINE (Code PA)**

1322 Patterson Avenue, SE

Suite 1000

Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5065